

PERFECT PEACE :

LETTERS-MEMORIAL

OF THE LATE

JOHN WARREN HOWELL, ESQ.

OF BATH, M.R.C.S.

BY

THE REV. DAVID PITCAIRN,

MINISTER OF EVIE AND RENDALL.

With an Introduction,

BY THE

REV. JOHN STEVENSON,

PERPETUAL CURATE OF CURY AND GUNWALLOE.

NINETEENTH THOUSAND.

LONDON :

J. H. JACKSON, ISLINGTON GREEN :

SEELEY, BURNSIDE, AND SEELEY, FLEET STREET ;

BINNS AND CO., BATH ; WIGHT, CHELTENHAM ;

ALLOM, YORK ; ELLIOTT, TORQUAY ; OLIPHANTS, EDINBURGH ;

ROBERTSON, DUBLIN.

M.DCCC.XLVIII.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO

THE EIGHTH EDITION.

SINCE April 1844, when this little volume first appeared, 18,000 copies of it have been sold. Many most interesting proofs of its usefulness have reached the ears, and gladdened the heart, of the author. And although the price is so small, the great extent of the sale has secured a considerable pecuniary benefit to Mrs. Howell and her children.

The objects for which the publication was undertaken have thus, by the blessing of God, been accomplished with a rapidity, and to an amount of success, far surpassing the most sanguine anticipations.

In issuing a new edition, the author feels himself under a strong and pleasing obligation, to express his deep gratitude, not only to the many kind friends in different parts of the country who have interested themselves in promoting the circulation of the book, but especially to HIM who overrules all events for His own glory, and who has so strikingly, in this case, given testimony to the faithfulness of His word : “THE LORD PRESERVETH THE STRANGER : HE RELIEVETH THE FATHERLESS AND WIDOW” (Psalm cxlvi. 9).

October 1847.

INTRODUCTION

BY THE

REV. J. STEVENSON.

EVERY living man is interested in the experience of the dying. It is the last school of wisdom to which the children of men can be advanced. Some, indeed, may question what concern they have with every sable narrative, and it is true they may not now feel that they are affected by it. Nevertheless here lies their interest: Are they not travellers upon the same road? Is not the velocity of time hurrying them onward to the same terminus? And shall we shut our eyes upon the experience of others, and bar the inlet of wisdom till we be ourselves destroyed? The reckless navigator may deem his own sagacity a safer guide than all the charts of older mariners, and with unfurled sail he may explore the half-known

coasts of distant lands, but it may only be to make a first and last discovery of his own folly upon the rock which they would have taught him to avoid.

"Nil humanum a me alienum puto," was the noble sentiment of a heathen philosopher. The lover of wisdom puts nothing from him that concerns his kind. He feels himself linked to every form of man by the tie of a common nature, and he treasures up the lessons of their experience as sources of instruction to direct his own. This is but common prudence. We all act upon it for life, and why not also for death? It is wisdom for a man's self. Who is there that does not practise it in his own department?

The Merchant fails not to inquire in what quarter of the globe men make their greatest gains, nor is he slow to mark that species of merchandise which has proved most lucrative. The Lawyer studies every case that bears analogy to that of his client, and makes himself familiar with the long list of precedents. The evidence which they furnish he will canvass, and avail himself of the successful pleas which they have urged. So likewise the Physician, the Statesman, the Leaders of armies or of navies, are all wise in their generation. They allow nothing to pass unnoticed which can contribute to their private good or the general benefit. It would be their folly if they did. The temple of wisdom is supported by the pillars of experience. Every discovery in science, every new

specimen of art, every fresh advance in knowledge, is of importance to the inhabitants of the globe.

Of all the objects of interest which this attractive world presents, none can equal that of a peaceful death-bed. An eclipse of the solar orb attracts the attention of all who are dependent on its light. The birth of an infant, awakens emotions in the breast of every one that is connected with its family. But—the departure of a man,—the eclipse of a fellow-mortal—the labour of his birth into eternity, should exceed them all in its thrilling interest to his fellows. No man ought to be insensible to its appeal. We know that we must follow him. We see ourselves, as it were, represented in him. His very sickness may be ours. The pain he feels, or the comforts he enjoys, may be ours also. We long, therefore, to know what are the feelings which his situation awakens. If calm and peaceful, we wish to ascertain by what means they became so ; and we see it to be our wisdom, our duty, and our happiness, so to adopt the same means, that when we reach the same verge we may enjoy the same consolations.

To meet this wish is the design of the excellent author of the following letters. To prepare the living for death, by these details of the experience of the dying, is the object of their publication. It is a spiritual study which is here set before us. The rise and progress of a soul heavenward is here described.

In the brief space of a few weeks, a "pilgrim's progress" from the city of destruction to the Zion of God is strikingly delineated. An experienced minister of Christ is here perceived guiding an immortal spirit on the way to everlasting happiness. It is a deeply interesting sight. The spiritual physician is called in to administer the medicine of eternal health. Stretched on his dying bed, lies a healer of the body ; himself past healing ; and the only inquiry that bursts from his lips is this, "What shall I do to be saved?"

Of all death-beds, that of the medical man is one of the most painfully interesting. He who has grappled with the king of terrors to rescue his fellow-men, he who has been used by Providence to deliver others, is now seized himself. His very profession teaches him at once to recognise the grasp of Death. He knows the ten thousand turnings of disease. He feels not only what it is, but what it will be. He can foresee its course, the stages of its progress, and the symptoms of its advance. He can calculate the various vibrations of the pulse, and fix his eye on the diseased mechanism within. The ulcerated lung, the ossifying heart, the internal cancer, are all as palpably before his mental vision as are the bleeding wound and the fractured limb to the eye of the common observer. He understands alike the power and the impotence of medicines. Surely, if ease could be where ignorance were bliss, it must be to

know nothing of anatomy on a sick-bed, and to be then unread in the great pharmacopœia of unavailable medicines. To have long prescribed for others, and at last to find nothing to prescribe for one's self, is a position of peculiar trial, demanding the strongest sympathy.

Such was the situation of the subject of the ensuing memorial. Mr. Howell was a rising man in the medical profession,—a profession requiring no little share of native talent, and of laborious research. In each of these he excelled. He is described by competent judges as a man of no ordinary stamp. His intellectual powers were of the highest order, and he had long been distinguished for the most patient, persevering study. These studies and powers had been directed to a profession which required him to be scrupulously exact in every thing that affected the well-being of man. He was accustomed to deal with realities. He could discriminate between the real and the apparent properties of things; and was not likely, therefore, to be easily deceived, or misled by false premises or specious arguments. The quality of his mind was “reflective, not demonstrative;” we may be therefore sure that every statement made to him, every truth propounded, would be maturely weighed and fully tested, ere utterance would be given to his accordance with it.

Besides, Mr. Howell is declared to be a man of

such integrity and truthfulness, that the fullest confidence might be reposed in the sincerity of every statement which he made. The truth of this abundantly appears in the following Memorial.

The contemplation, then, of the spiritual experience of such a character is highly satisfactory ; and, were it at all needful, a similar testimony might be borne to the christian fidelity of the narrator, by whom, we know, that the exactest shade and colouring would be given to every interview which words are capable of imparting.

In the opening letter, Mr. Howell is presented before us as " peculiarly standing in need of spiritual counsel and encouragement." But what occasion was there? His age and prospects fair, his wife and family presented strong arguments, indeed, for love to life. But it was not to love life that he sought encouragement, -- it was expressly to meet with death. And why a man, so free from vice, so virtuous and amiable, who had spent his time so honourably to himself and so usefully to others, should shrink more than our nature doth at the approach of death, the world can see no reason! Were he wanting in common fortitude, or did some secret sin against a fellow-creature lie heavy on his conscience, the fact would be explained. But these existed not. So far as man can judge, Mr. Howell possessed invincible fortitude, and a reputation unblemished and

unimpeachable. What, then, occasioned his depression? It was this: Mr. Howell had begun to reckon, that though he had not sinned in the sight of men, he had sinned before God. He felt that he had neither loved nor served his Maker as he ought; and therefore the prospect of soon being ushered into his holy presence filled him with dismay.

Like most other men, Mr. Howell, in the days of health, had chiefly looked to one side of his account, and was "well satisfied with himself" when he thought he had discharged the duties which he owed to his fellow-men. But what does it avail the prisoner, when tried on two indictments, to plead always his innocence as to the second, and pay no regard to the accusation of the first? Now man is such a prisoner, against whom a double indictment is made out; and, either in this world or in the next, he must give in his pleading to them both. "Thou hast sinned against thy God," and "Thou hast sinned against thy neighbour," is the twofold charge which the Scriptures record against every human being. To the due consideration of the first charge, men seldom or never apply themselves. In general, it is deemed quite enough to shew that they have not flagrantly violated the second. How awfully startled, then, must such persons be when death approaches, when conscience awakens, when the guilt of having forgotten God flashes upon their minds, and when

the voice of the unerring Judge seems already to condemn them!

Happy, thrice happy, surely, are those who are taught by the Spirit of God to consider the charge in its twofold character, and to seek for an advocate before it be too late. Of this class was Mr. Howell. He was no longer deceiving himself. He had begun honestly to consider the twofold charge which lay against him: he felt that he was guilty, and he knew not how to escape.

To man in such circumstances, how joyful is the message of the minister of Christ!—"An advocate is already appointed to you. Trust in him, and he will bring your case to a favourable termination." "But what," may the desponding prisoner answer,— "what can he do for me? what can he say on my behalf, for I am indeed guilty?" "This advocate," the messenger of God can reply, "has shed his blood to take away your guilt, and he has lived a perfectly righteous life towards God and man. Of this blood and of this righteousness he can plead, as your surety, that you may enjoy the benefit. Do you, then, place yourself in his hands?" "Who is he, that I may do so?" "He is Jesus Christ the righteous, whose name is Immanuel, God with us. He is the fellow of the Most High God, and yet he is your brother, having assumed your nature, and become bone of your bone. Love to man brought him from the realms of glory, and now

he is ascended up on high to plead for every one that believeth in him."

Imagine such a communication on undoubted authority to be made to a prisoner on the eve of trial. Is it not enough to transport him with joy? Such was the effect of the Gospel, simply and energetically stated, upon Mr. Howell. The glad tidings swallowed up every other feeling. "Grace and peace were multiplied unto him through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ his Lord" (2 Pet. i. 2). And so long as his attention remained fixed on the love of God in Christ towards him, he continued to experience the same exuberant joy. But, afterwards, when time for thought elapsed, this very natural consideration arose within his mind, "But I am altogether unworthy of such a friend as this, and of such a happiness as I now enjoy." We say this was a natural reflection, because, as we estimate men and things by their intrinsic value, we naturally conclude that God judges by the same rule. Though we rejoice, therefore, when we consider the free and blessed declarations of the Gospel of Christ, yet, when we begin to contemplate our own unworthiness, our joy is turned into mourning. This arises from three causes. First, imagining that God will estimate us by our own inherent value; second, hoping to acquire that value in his sight; and third, inadequately apprehending the nature of that Gospel which had made us glad.

To remedy these errors, we need to be convinced by the Word and Spirit of God, that he does not, and will not, estimate man by his personal value, or worthiness, because he has already pronounced that he possesses none. This judgment of God must be so inwrought into our judgment as to destroy the hope of our ever being able to possess any merit in his sight, and then, from this utter prostration of our hopes and of our own righteousness, we must flee to Him, whom God has graciously provided to be the Saviour of our souls. We must see that when God could not accept us in our own name, or for our own sake, he will receive us, and pardon us, and sanctify us, in the name and for the sake of his own Son. We must be brought to believe that the blood of Jesus expiates our sins before God, which even our own blood could not have done; and also to believe that the righteousness of Christ is as freely offered to us and is as fully available for us, as if we ourselves had lived his righteous life.

Such glad tidings, however, as the Gospel brings, appear at times to be too good to be true. We feel as though we could not believe them for joy! "Can such a creature as I am hope for heaven? Is the love of God so great and so gratuitous that it can reach to me? Is it really true that the Son of the Most High God died upon a cross to save my soul from hell?" Such are the thoughts that rise upon

the mind. They are the natural cogitations of the heart. It does not surprise us, then, to hear a similar sentiment from the mouth of Mr. Howell. On the contrary, we regard it as another evidence of that scrupulous sincerity with which he watched over each successive step of his spiritual progress. There was no eager, unscrutinising haste; not a single point was ever taken for granted. At one interview we observe that the bliss of heaven formed the captivating subject of conversation. The heart of the instructor was enraptured by it. An enthusiastic hearer would have appeared to reciprocate the feeling of exultation; but not so the subject of this narrative. "Mr. Howell looked grave. At last he remarked that he admitted the truth of all that had been advanced, but added, after some hesitation, 'It is indeed delightful to hear about the bliss of heaven; and my own reflections suggested by this tract, and by your conversations, have been most soothing and elevating. At the same time, I cannot subdue a continually rising idea, that it is premature in a person like me to entertain the hope of this bliss. All my former pursuits have been so exclusively of a worldly character, and my whole life has been marked by such forgetfulness of God, and indifference to the salvation which is by our Lord Jesus Christ, that I wish for your opinion whether I am not deceiving myself in this matter.'"

Whence did this new feeling originate? Mr.

Howell informs us. "I thought," he added, "that your theory of salvation was too simple. It seems too easy a way of getting to heaven." He thought the Gospel too good to be true. Its very freeness tempted him to disbelieve it. The frankness and the generosity of the love of God, exhibited in Christ, are so beyond the thoughts and ways of man (Isa. lv. 8), that even, after our minds have received the idea, we find it difficult to retain it. Our sins appear to be too great to be so easily passed by. Oh, unworthy thought! Easily passed by! Look to Calvary! See the beloved Son of God, bleeding, dying on the cross! Say, hadst thou been nailed there for thine own sins, wouldst thou still believe that they were easily passed by? Ah, no! And if a friend will give his body to be pierced instead of thine, are thy sins easily passed by? Yea, if God himself come down, and suffer in thy room, wilt thou still say that thy sins are easily passed by? Nay, rather let us more exquisitely feel for the sufferings of our Friend than we would do for our own. And let his wounds indelibly impress two grand ideas upon our hearts.—the greatness of our guilt, and the vastness of his love. To keep these two continually in mind is the duty of every christian. Yet we cannot, without an effort, keep them both equally before us. Like Peter, who had looked simply to his Lord, and thus had walked firmly upon the water, the christian,

after a time, looks to himself and to the billows that surround him, and he begins to sink. In thinking of himself, and of his own weakness, Peter forgot his Master, and his mighty power. So did Mr. Howell in the case before us; and so do all christians in the days of their despondency. They think of sin till they lose sight of that atonement which has been made for it. They think of their own unrighteousness till they forget that Christ is of God made righteousness unto them (1 Cor. i. 30). The true position for every disciple is this, so to see the deep that is beneath him as to lose all confidence in himself, and so to see the Saviour that is near him as to have all terror of the billows.

Christ Jesus 'as freely made himself our great deliverer. And shall we complain that his work is gratuitous, and that his deliverance is too common? What should we feel to hear the soldiers of France say, in reference to Waterloo, "It was too easy a victory?" Would we not indignantly reply, "So, indeed, it was *to you!*" Our general bore the heat and burden of the day. He gained a hard-fought victory and gave you a retreating and conquered enemy to pursue!" This reply presents us with an illustration of the christian's position. Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, has conquered sin, and death, and Satan. He triumphed over them on his cross (Col. ii. 15), and calls on us to pursue the

conquered foe. The duty of christians is to follow in the wake of victory. The whole hosts of hell are on the retreat. But never let us forget that, though vanquished, they are not yet destroyed. The retreating enemy, in a revengeful spirit, will turn on every opportunity, and take quick advantage of the incautious zeal or weak timidity of their pursuers. The fearful they will assail; before the bold and the courageous they will retire. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James, iv. 7). He flees, not simply because we resist, but because he feels he has been already conquered by our Lord. To say, then, that our way to heaven is too easy, is to speak with selfish reference to ourselves, overlooking the travail, and the agony, and blood of him who made it easy for us.

Yet we ought not to forget that this wrong conclusion originated in Mr. Howell from a right feeling. He was a man of an honourable mind. He knew that he had wronged his Maker, and he felt that he ought to make satisfaction,—nay, more, he wished to make it. He could not allow himself to be happy till this was accomplished. This is a most important point. Many honourable men of the world feel utterly at a loss how to solve this difficulty. They find it to be an effectual barrier to their progress; they feel as though it would not be honourable to accept such a free invitation to heaven, until they

have made a full reparation. Now here the Gospel meets them. It declares, "You cannot make this reparation yourselves; but Christ has put himself in your place, and has made it for you. He has made full satisfaction to God for your offences; yea, he has 'magnified the law,' which you have dishonoured, 'and made it honourable' (Isa. xlii. 21). Your invitation to heaven, then, is made to you on the very ground on which you desire to accept it. 'A full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction,' has been made for sin; so that God may be just, and yet the justifier of him who believes" (Rom. iii. 36).

Here, then, is something to lay hold of. The justice of God is satisfied. We feel that we now tread on solid ground. We see that the Gospel is no superficial thing, but a substantial reality. We learn that our case has been fully dealt with. We no longer hesitate. We accept the work of our Surety, and we rejoice. 'This became Mr. Howell's feeling; he understood the Gospel. "I see, then," he said, "that in order to be justified, our faith must embrace the blood of Christ for the pardon of our innumerable offences, and the perfect righteousness of Christ as a substitute for our want of righteousness." From this moment his peace and his progress were like a noble river in its flow. The spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Christ had been given to him (Eph. i. 17): the eyes of his understanding were enlightened:

he now knew that the hope of his calling was based on a solid and immoveable foundation ; and the affections of his heart became captivated by the love of Christ. The immediate effect was an ardent desire after holiness. It is deeply interesting to observe this. How delightful, how instructive is it to watch the progress of a soul ! The love of Christ, like fire, consumes our dross, and assimilates us to himself. No sooner did Mr. Howell understand the love of a crucified Saviour than he inquired, " But is there not provision in the Gospel scheme for our deliverance from the power of sin ? God's people surely should be holy. They for whom the Son of God died should themselves die unto sin ! "

The soul has attained an elevated position when it can utter this sentiment. It pants after holiness. The noblest ambition that can inspire a created being has now taken possession of the christian's breast—he longs to be restored to the image of God ! His attention, therefore, is again directed to the Gospel, and he finds it to be pre-eminently a provision for holiness. He finds therein not only a willing Saviour, but also a sanctifying Spirit. He learns, that it was by the secret drawings of this Spirit that his thoughts and desires were first turned to the truths of God's word. He perceives that his understanding was enlightened, his conscience awakened, and his affections captivated, by the operation of this Spirit. He now

knows that the outward voice of the minister is but the instrument, and that the inward voice of the Spirit is the power that worketh in him; and he feels that, under the quickening of this Spirit, his love to prayer is strengthening, that his delight in God's word is increasing, and that his hatred to sin, and his desires after purity in every thought and feeling, are burning with an intenser glow.

Thus the dying christian is made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. He does not now estimate himself only by the external act, but by the inward motive. He is no longer well satisfied with himself. He no longer flatters himself that he has discharged his duties to his neighbours. He feels that he owed to their soul a debt of love, and of sympathy, and of spiritual kindness, which he had never taken account of. He weeps at the thought of his previous blindness and self-righteousness; and, while he casts all the past upon the atoning blood of his Redeemer, he will be enabled, in all honesty, to say, by the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, "Henceforth it is my whole delight to love the Lord my God, with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my strength, and with all my mind: and I do desire to love my neighbour as I love myself!"

What a change has here taken place! The two-fold law of condemnation has given way to the two-fold law of love! The man has grown up into Christ

(Eph. iv. 15). Such was at last the case with Mr. Howell. He had put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. iv. 24). And so sincerely and fully had he put off the old man with his deeds (Col. iii. 9), that even the reflection of sin in a dream of the night filled him with self-abhorrence!

Behold the workmanship of God! "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" The Lord alone! Behold, then, and admire the power of God! Go forward, reader, to the perusal of these letters. May these excellent instructions, by which Mr. Howell was conducted from darkness to light, from perplexity to peace, be equally blessed to thee! Learn, that no natural amiability of heart, no gigantic powers of intellect, nothing but the Gospel of Christ, can secure peace to a troubled conscience. See how former worldliness and forgetfulness of God, and indifferency to Christ's religion, come back with a heavy weight upon the soul: what thorns to the dying pillow, what hinderers of spiritual progress, those things become, of which, in health, but small account is made. Pray then, earnestly, for thine own soul, that the Spirit of the living God may make thee wise unto salvation. From the sublime and solemn spectacle of a fellow-creature calmly composing himself to his last sleep, retire with this resolution indelibly imprinted on thy heart, "To me to live" shall be

“Christ” (Phil. i. 21). Thou shalt thus experience the same marvellous transformation with the subject of this interesting narrative. The medicine of the Gospel will produce in thee also the true symptoms of everlasting health. In the tenderness of his love the Great Physician will watch over the progress of thy soul’s convalescence. By the greatness of his skill he will insure the restoration of thy moral strength. In the fulness of his power he will raise up the new man within thee in the holy bloom of spiritual health; and, no longer requiring to detain thee in the sick-chamber of this world, he will bid thee also go to that genial clime, where no danger of a relapse can reach thee, where the noxious vapours of sin and of temptation cannot enter, and where, amongst the spirits of the just, thou shalt be made perfect in holiness for ever.

J. S.

*Cury Vicarage, Helston, Cornwall,
27th January, 1844.*

MEMORIALS,

§c. §c.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

IN the *Bath and Cheltenham Gazette*, of January 10th, 1844, there appeared the following obituary:—

“At Torquay, on the 4th instant, aged 33, John Warren Howell, Esq. Surgeon, of Axford Buildings, in this city.

“We have a melancholy duty in recording the death of our esteemed friend, the late John Warren Howell, M.R.C.S., late Honorary Secretary of the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution, and Corresponding Member of the London Botanical, and other learned societies. His professional life was marked by firmness, ability, and humanity. Of a powerful, energetic, and original mind, his whole life was devoted to the acquisition of knowledge, and promoting the intellectual attainments of mankind.

As a lecturer he was eminently distinguished. Many of the articles on botony, astronomy, &c., which have appeared in this journal, and which have been honoured by the learned with public eulogiums, were communicated by Mr. Howell. During a long period of suffering from pulmonary consumption, the mind of Mr. Howell was exclusively devoted to the truths of revelation—a subject, the deep importance of which he had contemplated from his earliest youth, but the full enjoyment of which he never realised, until, by conversation with christian friends at Torquay, and a prayerful searching of the Scriptures, his faith became steadfast. His confidence in the all-sufficiency of his Redeemer's ransom was to the last moment of his life spoken of with humility, gratitude, and joy. Beloved by all who had the felicity of his confidence, for his unselfish character, his sincerity, and his unblemished virtue, his memory will be long cherished, and his example revered. He has left a widow and three infant children to deplore his loss; for whom, during his short career as a general practitioner in this city, and subsequent long declining state, it was impossible for him to make any provision."

The information contained in the foregoing extract produces the conviction, that, in point of talent and attainment, Mr. Howell was elevated far above the

average of mankind, and awakens a desire to know something more concerning his active life, and his peaceful death. A Memoir of his literary and scientific life would be acceptable to his personal friends, and of advantage to the interests of science. But unhappily the present hindrances to the accomplishment of this desirable object appear to be insurmountable.

Besides a large collection of most beautiful drawings on animal and vegetable anatomy, and very numerous diagrams, illustrative of an immense variety of topics in the different departments of natural history, Mr. Howell has left a multiplicity of notes and memoranda which would have assisted himself in prosecuting a work he contemplated on "THE UNITY OF NATURE." But these materials are considered to be too disconnected and fragmental for publication, unless they were worked into shape and form by some person of a similar turn of mind, and who was thoroughly acquainted with Mr. Howell's particular views and opinions: and such a person cannot be found. One of his literary friends in Bath writes to me:—"For the last ten years I have seen Mr. Howell almost daily, and, having his entire confidence, perfectly understood his beautiful character. Of his attainments and mental powers I dare not trust myself to write, and feel conscious—sadly conscious, that, amongst those who loved him, and delighted in his company, there is not one who can do justice to his

memory. He soared high above us all—above all I ever knew; but it is impossible to make this evident to the world."

In the absence of a Memoir, the reader will be better prepared for understanding and appreciating the nature of that peace, into the enjoyment of which Mr. Howell was so mercifully brought in his latter days, by a

BRIEF SKETCH

of his professional career, of his scientific and literary occupations, and of his general character and dispositions.

JOHN WARREN HOWELL was born in Bath, on the 21st day of December, 1810. In that city he received his rudimental education, which was defective rather than liberal, so that in after-life he was wont to speak with regret of what he called "the waste of his early years." To a great extent, it may be said that he was self-taught. The innate vigour of his intellect, and his insatiable thirst for knowledge, in no small degree compensated for the disadvantages under which he laboured; and, while yet a youth, it was remarked, that his attainments were beyond his years.

At the age of fifteen he was articled to a medical

practitioner in Bath; and, during the five years of his apprenticeship, he not only applied himself with all diligence to the more immediate studies of his profession, but eagerly seized on all opportunities of acquiring information on every subject, and especially on subjects connected with natural history, for which he manifested an early predilection.

When his apprenticeship expired in the year 1830, he was received as a dresser into the Bath Casualty Hospital, where he passed twelve months, and then matriculated as medical student in Trinity College, Dublin. There he enjoyed the public instructions of the late Dr. Macartney, and other eminent professional men, with whom he had also occasionally the benefit of holding private intercourse. As a student he gained considerable distinction; and, even at this period, his proficiency in science enabled him, in 1832, to deliver a course of lectures on Medical Botany, in the theatre of the King William Street School of Medicine, which were recognised by the Royal College of Surgeons, and by the Apothecaries' Company, London. This was certainly a very gratifying compliment to so young a man.

Having completed his curriculum of medical education, he returned to England in 1833, bringing with him an increased and ardent love for the profession he had chosen, a large accumulation of professional

and general knowledge, and the highest testimonials of industry, ability, and character.

Mr. Howell lost no time in offering himself to the Royal College of Surgeons, London, as a candidate for a diploma. He has himself preserved an interesting memorandum of his examinations. In answering the first question propounded to him, he had entered so readily, so fully, and so intelligently, into an explanation of the subject, that he was dismissed in ten minutes. He expected a lengthened detention; and, as he walked towards the door, uncertain as to the cause of his speedy dismissal, it is probable that his expressive countenance betrayed his inward feelings; for one of the examiners recalled him, and said, "You are accepted, sir; and we thank you for the gratification and pleasure you have afforded us." The porter, surprised at the candidate's premature return, concluded he must have been rejected, and addressed him in a kind and doleful tone, "I'm sorry for you, young man." But Mr. Howell's bright smile, as he uttered, "All's right," changed his condolence into congratulation.

In July of the same year, he commenced practice in his native city, and soon felt the want of that congenial society he had enjoyed during the prosecution of his studies in Dublin. There, besides the kindred spirits among the students with whom he associated,

he had been favoured with occasional interviews with men of the highest consideration for talent and acquirements—men from whose matured experience he gathered useful information, which acted both as a stimulus and as a guide to his own inquiries. In Bath there were also many eminent literary and professional men. But it was not the privilege of Mr. Howell to have gained access to their society. He was young, and unknown, and, as yet, moving in a sphere of comparative obscurity. He endeavoured, however, to remedy this misfortune by cultivating the acquaintance of young men who gave indication of genius and of enterprise; and, as a point of concentration, as well as a means of mutual improvement, at the suggestion of Mr. Howell, and chiefly through his instrumentality, the Bath Literary and Scientific Association was organised in 1837. Mr. Howell was nominated to the office of honorary secretary. In connexion with this Society he first appeared before the Bath public as a lecturer. The subject announced was, "The Unity of Nature." A copy of the programme of this lecture now lies before me, and decidedly proves how comprehensive were his views of this sublime subject at that early stage of his professional life.

Mr. Howell's public lectures were well attended, and, among other beneficial effects, they increased the number of the members of the Association,—many of

whom, now pursuing with success the path of industry and of knowledge, into which their zealous founder directed them, will remember with grateful pleasure the able and beautiful papers which Mr. Howell read at their weekly meetings, on Astronomy, Optics, Chemistry, Botany, Geology, Mineralogy, &c. But this Association had a short-lived existence. In fact, its prosperity, in a great measure, depended on Mr. Howell's resources and exertions, and drew more largely on his time than was convenient. For this and other reasons, which need not be detailed, its dissolution became inevitable.

Subsequently, Mr. Howell delivered public lectures, and courses of lectures, on a variety of scientific subjects. And in January 1842 he attempted to exhibit, in ten lectures, "The propriety and usefulness of Anatomy and Physiology as a branch of general education."

These lectures were delivered in the Hall of the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution, of which Mr. Howell had, some time previously, and in a very gratifying manner, been appointed the honorary secretary. They attracted crowded audiences, and were illustrated by anatomical preparations, and by numerous large drawings executed by Mrs. Howell, under the superintendence of her husband.

In the spring of the following year, a correspondence took place with the Liverpool Mechanics' Insti-

tution, which resulted in the consent of Mr. Howell to give a course of lectures in Liverpool "On the Brain and Nervous System." But his preparations for this undertaking were checked by the progress of the disease, which ultimately proved fatal.

All Mr. Howell's lectures displayed a deep and accurate knowledge of the many different topics of which they treated. They were specimens of the versatility of his genius, as well as of the extent of his researches. They were distinguished by great originality of thought, and by profound logical acumen. And, from his command of matter, they were generally prolonged to double the length of time that is usual; but the attention of his audiences was sustained throughout by the continual flow of new and interesting ideas, and by his elegant and engaging manner of delivery. Mr. Howell was pre-eminent as a lecturer; and it is much to be regretted that none of his very instructive lectures were fully written out. He was gifted with an uncommon facility of expressing his sentiments in the most perspicuous and appropriate language; and, on this account, he was in the habit of speaking from short notes. Sometimes, indeed, he spoke with the greatest fluency for two hours, and altogether *extempore*.*

* Since this sketch was completed I have seen letters from two of Mr. Howell's scientific companions. One of them, who is at present resident in Bath, says, in reference to the

On the subject of botany, however, which was one of Mr. Howell's principal favourites, two separate series of articles were inserted in the *Bath and Cheltenham Gazette*, to which allusion is made in the obituary. These articles were entitled, "Walks in the Botanic Garden," and amounted in number to no less than forty. Other articles of a scientific nature, from the same fruitful pen, appeared at different times in the same respectable journal. One of them, "On the Structure of the Capsule of PAPAVERACEÆ, and on the Nature of the Stigmata of CRUCIFERÆ," was afterwards inserted in No. 65 of the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*. It arrested the attention of scientific men, and a continuance of

year 1842 and the early part of 1843,—“A week seldom passed during which I had not, on different days, spent much of my time in his company. During my intimacy with him, which was the intimacy of brothers, I could not fail being struck with his originality of thought, with his acuteness in analysis, and with his patient perseverance in research. And I may say that scientific inquiries, to be at all worthy of regard, require no small degree of these qualifications.” “His mode of lecturing was clear and decisive, generally quiet, although the interest of the subject not unfrequently led the lecturer to continue speaking much beyond the usual time allotted, and thus to exert himself beyond his strength. It was the opinion that there was matter enough in one lecture to have made two very good ones.”

The other gentleman, resident in London, thus writes re-

Mr. Howell's communications was requested for that very able periodical.

Perhaps it may be deemed advisable to gather into a small volume all the articles, on botany, astronomy, and other scientific topics, which Mr. Howell himself had thought worthy of submitting to the public, and which, in their detached forms, have already been marked by the approval of competent judges. Although they are only isolated parts, or small fragments, of large and comprehensive subjects, still they bear upon them the stamp of an original and reflective mind; for, however much Mr. Howell consulted the works of authors of established reputation, he subjected the truth of all their statements to the test of

specting Mr. Howell,—“As a philosopher, he was diligent in the pursuit of science, treading her mazy and difficult paths with confidence, perseverance, and success.” “His reasoning was generally characterised by originality of thought, and his ideas expressed in language appropriate, firm, and unequivocal.” “His genius soared into heaven, and told the stars; descended into the sea, and explored the deep; expanded over the earth, and comprehended the three kingdoms in his grasp.” “Although universality of acquirements is generally acknowledged to be incompatible with the deep reflective mind, yet there are so many instances on record of men whose intellects were so strong as to enable them to pierce the very penetralia of wisdom, that I do not hesitate to apply the epithet *universal genius* to Howell, or to class him among their number. His acquirements were as sterling as his talents were varied.”

strict investigation, or of analytical experiment. He made observations for himself, and exercised careful and profound reflection on every subject that engaged his attention. He tied himself down to no systems. He called no man master. Truth, wherever he could find it, and from whomsoever he could learn it, was the grand object of which he never lost sight. As an intelligent, and unprejudiced, and persevering student of the arcana of Nature, it is known to his intimate friends that he was continually making discoveries in some one or other of the departments of science; and had he lived to prosecute and arrange, and publish his valuable researches, there is good ground for believing that he would have earned for himself a high and deserved rank amongst the distinguished few whose learning and whose labours have rendered their names illustrious in the annals of philosophy and science.

Of Mr. Howell's general character and dispositions it would be presumptuous in me, on so short an acquaintance, to attempt a full and regular delineation. But I feel justified in mentioning some points that prominently appeared in the intercourse with him which I was privileged to enjoy during the latter part of his life.

The first thing that struck me as unusual was *the entire exclusion from his conversation of all mere com-*

monplace remarks. As a stranger in the place, as an invalid whose comfortable sensations were very dependent on heat and sunshine, and as an intelligent and social member of society, interested in the welfare of his country and of mankind, it would have been allowable—it would have been natural, to have asked of a visitor what was the news of the day, who had arrived and who departed, or what was the state of the weather. I do not, however, recollect of Mr. Howell ever saying one word to me on either of these never-ending topics of talk with ordinary people. On every occasion of my visiting him, he had scarcely answered my inquiries about his health, when he plunged at once into some subject of importance. He did this the very first day I sat at his bedside ; and he did so constantly.

In connection with this extraordinary absence of trifling remarks, I must notice *the uncommon activity of his mind*, which never was overcome, excepting by the power of opiates, or by occasional fits of exhaustion. Even whilst lying on bed so long, notwithstanding the general debility to which he was reduced, and his incapacity for continuous reading, he was never found in a listless or dreamy mood. His mind was not only actively employed, but his whole mental energies were intently fixed *on some one particular subject*. This great power of abstraction, or concentrativeness, forced itself on my attention as a

peculiarity. In his circumstances, it might have been expected that the activity of his mind would have manifested itself in restlessness,—in the ungovernable roving of his thoughts amidst the immensity of subjects with which he was familiar, and affecting even his bodily frame with continual tossings to and fro. But the very reverse of this was manifested. His thoughts were under complete control. They ran all in the direction of some one truth that had been submitted to his consideration; and they never were diverted from it till he had sifted it to his satisfaction. In calling on him any day, I found him still occupied with what had been the theme of the former conversation.

And then there was *a calmness and composure of demeanour* such as are rarely met with. In the midst of much bodily uneasiness, I have frequently seen him remain still as a rock for the whole period of my visit. The body was as quiescent as the mind was active. Religion, no doubt, latterly exercised a mighty and a blissful influence over him, in the patience, and resignation, and peace which it supplied; but, independent of all that was superinduced by religious principle, there was evidently a magnanimity in his constitutional temperament, which raised him superior to the pains and annoyances which would have caused irritation to most men. And, besides, I believe that he had tutored himself

into a kind of philosophic dignity of conduct, which was equally removed from sinful pride, and from stoical indifference. His judgment always maintained the mastery over his feelings. He endured what he could not remove. He knew the folly of making worse what was beyond his power to mend. He, therefore, endeavoured to make the best of things as they were.*

Another characteristic feature that attracted my notice was *a combination of opposite qualities*, acting in antagonist forces, and imparting to his mind a peculiar and beautiful equipoise. Confidence in his own capabilities,—in his resources, and motives, and

* The following anecdote is a striking instance of his self-command and composure under circumstances of trial :—One day when a lecture "On the Eye and Vision" had been advertised, he on the next day in the morning, he gave directions about the proper place on the wall of the room of a number of diagrams, which were necessary for illustration. He did not return home seeing his papers till the company had assembled. But, on entering the room, he discovered, on a glance, that the diagrams were entirely misplaced. To have put them right would have caused both delay and confusion. Mr. Howell displayed neither displeasure nor disappointment. He commenced a lecture on an entirely different subject; and, at the conclusion, he explained to the audience what had happened, and intimated the day on which he would deliver the lecture he had prepared. Not one man in a thousand could have acted as he did.

intentions,—was mingled with diffidence in subjecting himself to the judgment of other persons, and with great modesty in stating his own opinions. Candour and sincerity in acknowledging ignorance or error, were accompanied with a kind of reservation, as if he were afraid of committing himself too far. An apparent frankness and suavity of manners was blended with an indescribable something that forbade familiarity. And, with a very remarkable talent for communicating instruction to others, he himself was largely possessed with the spirit of docility, and was ever ready and eager to be taught. As the result of all these conflicting sentiments and feelings, his character was adorned by constant watchfulness over himself, and by much prudence and discretion in his dealings with mankind. He was a cautious man.

The mind of Mr. Howell had, indeed, been cast in a noble mould. He was richly endowed with those high mental qualifications which constitute the true philosopher. But, in addition to so much that was purely intellectual, there was about him a moral loveliness that greatly elevates our conceptions of his general character. His conduct was very blameless in the sight of man. He did not degrade himself, as many do, by sensual and vicious indulgences. The prudence and self-respect which guided him in other things exerted their benign influence to uphold him in the path of virtue. The refinement of his mind,

too, and his extreme delicacy of feeling, made vice odious to him. Thus he avoided many of the evil practices into which young men are often so easily ensnared. And, by the concurrent testimony of those who knew him best, he was a highly honourable, upright, and amiable man. But this must not be mistaken for scriptural and spiritual religion. He certainly had at heart an abiding theoretic reverence for the Divine Being; and he conscientiously professed belief in Divine Revelation. He constantly and openly repudiated the sceptical opinions so prevalent in the French schools of medicine and of science. In his own study of the manifold works of God, he took pleasure in discovering the wonderful traces of divine wisdom, and of almighty power, whether in the magnificence of the starry heavens, or in the anatomy of the minutest plants. And in his public lectures he appears to have delighted in exhibiting and explaining to his fellow-creatures, and especially to the young, whatever was calculated to exalt their conceptions of THE GREAT CREATOR. The Divine Being whom he so habitually revered was the God of Nature. But it is, nevertheless, a painful truth, which must not be concealed, that, in the midst of all his studies, Mr. Howell *practically* forgot the God who is revealed to us only in the Holy Scriptures; and forgot his obligations to obey those Scriptures, whose divine inspiration he acknowledged.

The fear of God was not before his eyes; the love of God was not in his heart; the glory of God was not the object he had in view, nor the end at which he aimed; the day of holy rest which God has set apart for his own special service, was desecrated by secular occupations; the public worship of God was seldom attended, and family worship was not thought of; the welfare of his immortal soul was overlooked; the great concerns of the eternal world were neglected. This is no exaggeration. It is the substance of his own heartfelt regrets,—of his own tearful confessions, on a dying bed.

It is willingly admitted that the pursuits in which Mr. Howell had employed his noble talents, and spent his time, often by night, as well as by day, and prematurely wasted his strength, were not in themselves sinful, and that they had yielded him a large amount of intellectual and rational gratification. So likewise, it is no more than justice to record how kind and dutiful he was in all the varied relations of life. He was decidedly a social and domestic man. So long as he remained under the parental roof, he was far from despising parental authority. And when he married he gave to the object of his choice that faithful devotedness of affection which he claimed and received in return. The endearments of wedded life made him indifferent to the pleasures of public amusements and of private parties. With his wife

and children, and with the quiet companionship of a few scientific friends, he found a perpetual source of social and domestic happiness. But he was brought to see and acknowledge that he had sinned in giving to creature objects that ardent regard and exclusive affection to which they were not entitled. And he was made to feel that God himself, as reconciled to us in Jesus Christ, is the only source of pure, and satisfying, and lasting enjoyment.

When divine grace taught him that he was a sinner standing in need of salvation, and that he was a dying man unprepared for the eternity to which he was approaching, then he experienced the utter inefficiency of all his former pursuits, and of all his acquired knowledge, and of all his moral excellencies, and of all his social and domestic enjoyments, to quiet his fears, or to inspire a cheering hope. And so soon as his heart was opened to receive "the grace, mercy, and peace," which are multiplied towards us through the knowledge and faith of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, then he would have said to his learned and scientific associates, as he did actually say to his wife, "We have indeed lived very happily together, but we have *missed much happiness*; we have been strangers to *true happiness*; and, were we to live our lives over again, we should be infinitely more happy in loving and serving God than ever we have been before."

Mr. Howell did not rank himself amongst the pious and the devout, nor was he in the habit of associating with them. He was too honest to profess what he did not sincerely feel and conscientiously practise. In fact, the inconsistencies which he observed in persons who did make high religious professions had been a stumbling-block to him from his youth upwards. At the same time, it would be a perversion of truth to say, or to give reason to suppose, that he ever was regardless of religion. He was as far removed as possible from scepticism, and the frame of his mind was too serious to allow him to scoff at what was sacred. His desire to obtain knowledge of all kinds prompted him to make a study of what is called natural theology. He also carefully examined the evidences of the inspiration of the Bible, and he spoke to me of his fondness for controversial divinity. Such subjects afforded scope for intellectual prowess ;—for reflection, and for argument. Besides, his constitutional love of truth,—his love of finding out where truth lay,—worked together with his natural inquisitiveness in renewing his religious inquiries from time to time. Neither was he speculatively ignorant of the peculiar and essential doctrines of christianity. These, as well as less important and more curious matters, received a share of his all-grasping consideration. With his professional friend Dr. Morgan, he used to converse freely on

religious topics. From this gentleman he obtained much information on the errors of Popery, and likewise on the Unitarian heresy. And latterly, when the appearance of consumptive symptoms led him to think of their probable termination, he was thankful for "the words in season" which the doctor occasionally dropped while in professional attendance upon Mr. Howell previous to his leaving Bath.

Having thus briefly sketched the character of Mr. Howell, and adverted to his literary and scientific attainments, the duty which now devolves on me is to furnish the reader with

A NARRATIVE

of the gracious dealings of God with this highly gifted man, and particularly of what fell under my own observation during the latter part of his fatal illness. This duty is as free from difficulty as it is full of delight.

In the arrangements of Providence, it not unfrequently happens that the loss of bodily health and temporal advantages is made subservient to the acquisition of spiritual and eternal life. It was so with Mr. Howell. His illness set a limit to the extent of his exertions; it interrupted the constancy of his persevering application; it checked the ardour of his

pursuit after increasing knowledge ; it put the stamp of "vanity and vexation of spirit" on his ambitious desires to gain some notoriety in the world of letters ; and thus a new direction was given to his thoughts and his inquiries. In fact, it constituted the commencement of a new era in his history, for from this time he began to regard religion as something practical and personal ; and yet the change was slow and gentle, rather than sudden and decided.

When first he came to Torquay, in May last year, his disease had not made great progress, and he was alone. His wife and family were left behind, as his stay was not intended to be for any length of time. His physical strength was not as yet so much impaired as to incapacitate him for out-of-doors exercise and enjoyment ; and to him it was a real and a great enjoyment to saunter in the Devonshire lanes, where the luxuriant hedges afforded him the richest fields for botanising. Still more peculiar and enthusiastic was his delight in strolling along the shores of Torbay, and in examining the varieties of marine plants and animals with which the locality abounds ; for he had been in the habit, now and then, of having a box of the *nett-refuse* sent to him at Bath from the very place where he now resided. It was quite a pleasure to find himself at the sea-side ; and here he had the additional pleasure of meeting with different

individuals of similar tastes with himself, with whom he could converse on his favourite topics, and who were qualified to appreciate his attainments.

It was on the occasion of his first visit to Torquay that he made the acquaintance of Dr. Tetley, who soon became his attached friend as well as his skilful physician. He was a daily visitor at the house of the Rev. S. F. Statham : and by degrees his friends and acquaintances increased, all of whom, as far as I have heard, were led to feel an unusual interest in Mr. Howell ; and some of them, under the constraining influence of christian love, yearned over him as a hopeful young man who was not far from the kingdom of heaven. He was frequently drawn into important conversation on the fundamental truths of the Gospel by individuals who longed to see him partaking of those consolations which nothing earthly can administer to the sick and dying, and of that hope which is full of immortality. A young clergyman from Suffolk, who was also at Torquay as an invalid, took a peculiar interest in Mr. Howell. He frequently accompanied him in his botanising excursions, and was sedulous in his endeavours to bring him to the simple faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. But God's time of mercy was not yet come. Mr. Howell listened with patient attention to every statement of divine truth that was submitted to him, and where there was room for it he entered eagerly into argument. But,

as he afterwards acknowledged, it was nothing more than the play of the understanding. In the letters which he every day wrote home, there were continual and interesting notices of the places he had visited, and of the natural objects he had examined, and of the benefit which his health was deriving from the genial climate ; but he said little on that one subject which he afterwards felt to be the "one thing needful." He did not write as a man who had been convinced of his guilt and danger. His letters breathed no anxious concern about spiritual health, no urgent desires after everlasting salvation ; the comparatively unimportant researches into the beautiful and wonderful mechanism and properties of the works of God still maintained a disproportionate share of his mental energies. He was not yet brought to feel that the greatest and most important of all studies is, the knowledge of God himself as he is revealed to his sinful creatures in the Holy Scriptures.

Mr. Howell improved in health and strength very steadily ; and in the beginning of July he left Torquay, under the impression that every unfavourable symptom had been subdued, and that he was able to resume his usual occupations at Bath. In this, however, he was sadly mistaken. The warning he had had of consumptive tendencies was unhappily and unaccountably lost upon him. Misled by the delusive character of the disease, and flushed with the speedy

renovation of his health, he devoted himself with too much eagerness to his professional practice, and to his scientific pursuits. In a few weeks he became worse than ever. A consultation was held, and his medical advisers judged it necessary that he should instantly again leave Bath. They were also of opinion, that the only probability of his ultimate recovery depended on a residence for a term of years in a soft and genial climate. Mr. Howell was therefore obliged, in distressed manner to break up his establishment, and abandon his practice; and he resolved on returning to the place where he had formerly been benefited.

But he was thrown into a state of great alarm by the decidedly unfavourable view which had been taken of his case, and by the subsequent arrangements; and, when he came the second time into Devonshire, early in August there was a very manifest alteration on him in respect both of body and of mind. His strength was prostrated. His nervous system had sustained a radical shock. He was depressed in spirits, and greatly agitated. A lodging had been taken for him in the village of Torre, adjoining to Torquay; and, on his arrival, although he had spent a night on the road, he suffered under such extreme exhaustion, that the people of the house feared he might have died.

It was deemed advisable, not only that Mr. Howell

should leave Bath without delay, but that he should avoid the bustle and disagreeableness of a family movement under such trying circumstances. Matters of indispensable business were devolved on Mrs. Howell, who was detained for several days; and, when she arrived at Torre, she found her husband in a state of great uneasiness, from the apprehension that his death was certain, and that it might be sudden.

That evening, after his wife had read a portion of Scripture to soothe and comfort him, he asked her to pray with him. This request took her by surprise,—it was something quite new. She was unaccustomed to pray aloud, and felt obliged to decline. “Then I must do it myself,” said Howell; and he did pray with her, which he had never done before. He was in distress, and felt that God was his only refuge. He felt that prayer was more than a duty—it was a privilege; and from this time they had always prayer together, morning and evening, although a book of prayers was commonly used.

On Sunday morning, Mrs. Howell went to Torre Church. At the commencement of the Litany, it startled her to hear the name of her husband read out as a sick person desiring the prayers of the Church; and, on inquiry afterwards, she found this had been done at his own solicitation. He had written a note to the Rev. J. Blackmore, the officiating curate, in which he requested to be publicly prayed

for, and, at the same time, hoped Mr. Blackmore would visit him.

Every thing now indicated that Mr. Howell was in earnest. He read the Bible diligently, with a wish to understand it. His correspondence with his friends at Bath did not entirely omit the mention of literary and scientific subjects; but it was characterised by this new feature, that he intimated, without disguise or reserve, the dangerous condition to which he was reduced, and his desire to seek for consolation in religion. As he himself confessed on a dying bed, the first chastisement laid upon him by his heavenly Father was not severe enough. He was not sufficiently humbled; nor had he been brought to any real and permanent contrition. But now he was sorely chastened: and it was the chastening of a loving Father, who designed to bless and not to curse—to pardon, and not to punish; and who, by means of chastisement, was about to impart to this wanderer the spirit of adoption, and to prepare him for enjoying the privileges of the heavenly family. Whilst God laid him low under the rod of disease, he seemed to be addressing him in the very words of remonstrance, which of old he put into the mouth of his prophet, “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Harken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself

in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me : hear, and your soul shall live." God had purposes of mercy towards him, and was softening his heart under this remonstrance, and opening his ear to welcome the gracious invitation, "Ho, every one that thirsteth. come ye to the waters ; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price." Isaiah, lv. 1, 2.

Dr. Tetley renewed his professional attendance on Mr. Howell. He found that the insidious disease which preyed on him had made rapid progress ; but, on the other hand, there was a cheering earnestness for instruction in divine things, and for the experience of their power on his own heart, such as had not been manifested at any period of his former visit to Torquay. The doctor saw him daily, and was encouraged, by his subdued and teachable spirit, to hope that a time of blessing was at hand. Mr. Blackmore also visited him frequently ; and he has told me he took great pleasure in conversing with Mr. Howell. Although his spiritual progress was not as yet very marked, still he always found in him a singularly interesting and hopeful inquirer after the way of life which the Gospel reveals. The subjects on which they chiefly conversed were the amazing love of God to sinners, displayed in the gift of his Son for our salvation, and the atonement for sin which was

effected by the Saviour's humiliation and death on our account. These were the grand consoling truths that now supremely engaged his thoughts, and the contemplation of which tended to tranquillise his agitated mind. But as yet he had not obtained a spiritual discernment of them, nor had his faith so embraced them as to give him a peaceful and satisfying hope of his own forgiveness and acceptance with God.

After a few weeks he considerably recovered in health and in spirits. He got out in a bath-chair to enjoy the open air, and the lovely landscapes that met the eye at every turn. He even gained strength sufficient to walk short distances; and he greatly rejoiced in being able to go to Torre Church, where he gave public thanks to God for what he had experienced of his goodness. But, as the season advanced, he again relapsed. After his removal to Torquay for the winter, he only once attended divine service, although his residence was close to Trinity Church. He now declined rapidly; and he was entirely confined to bed towards the end of November, when my acquaintance with him commenced.

At this important crisis, the loss of the strength which he had recently regained, and the appearance of fresh symptoms which marked the progress his disease was making, again disappointed his hopes of

recovery, and deprived him of the comparative tranquillity he had been enjoying. His inward distress became great ; and so did his anxiety for relief. All human refuges were unavailing. But he was looking to God, and crying for mercy ; and he neither looked nor cried in vain.

As a minister of the gospel of Christ, I was asked to visit Mr. Howell, in consequence of the absence of other clergymen who were wont to see him ; and I was urged to go, because he was a dying man who truly needed, and who greatly desired, spiritual consolation.

Although I had not hitherto happened to meet Mr. Howell, nor ever heard one word of his splendid talents and high acquirements, the first sight of him convinced me that he was a superior man ; and, in our first conversation, there was something so unusually interesting as to make me resolve to keep some record of his case.

In the following

SERIES OF LETTERS,

there is preserved a simple and faithful statement of those divine truths which were successively submitted to his consideration, and likewise of the impressions which their reception made upon his mind ; of his deliverance out of spiritual darkness and distress, and of his entrance into the enjoyment of that "peace

with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," which is the accompaniment of a heaven-taught faith.

It ought to be mentioned that the letters are *genuine*, and that they were not originally intended for publication ; but, to the much-valued friend and brother to whom they were addressed, the work of grace in Mr. Howell appeared so peculiarly instructive, that he hoped it might prove a blessing to many. And I could not gainsay the assertion, that the unconstrained communications of one friend to another concerning any recent event, have a freshness and naturalness about them that never can be imparted to a more formal narrative drawn up at a subsequent period. For this reason I have consented to the insertion of the letters in this place, although it may subject me to the charge of bringing myself too prominently into view. But it is my earnest request that the reader may fix his mind on the dying man, and on the great truths which were the subject of conversation, without giving a thought of any kind to the writer of the letters.

LETTER I.

To the Rev. JOHN STEVENSON, Cury Vicarage.

Torquay, November 28th, 1843.

MY BELOVED FRIEND,

You are not unacquainted with the peculiarities of this place. The natural beauties of the locality have feasted your taste for fine scenery; the kindness of christian friends has oft refreshed your spirit; and the poor invalids, who make up so large a portion of its winter inhabitants, have called forth your warmest sympathies.

During your own occasional sojournings here you heard of many cases of most affecting interest, and not a few passed under your immediate personal observation. In the midst of your own suspension from active duty, I am well aware how much of a painful pleasure you felt in visiting the chambers of sickness and of death, and in administering the consolations of the gospel of Christ to your fellow-

sufferers ; and you know that, during those welcome respites from severe illness with which God is pleased to favour myself, I, also, according to my ability, willingly take a part in the work of comforting the sick, the dying, and the bereaved.

Since I first came to Torquay, there have occurred many events which produced a very deep and solemn interest, but of which I now regret having preserved no record. Memory is often treacherous ; and, by permitting such occurrences to sink into the grave of oblivion, we deprive ourselves and others of the profitable lessons they are calculated to impart. It is good not only to notice at the time, but afterwards to meditate upon, the wonderful workings of Providence. The Psalmist says, " Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord " (Psalm cvii. v. 43). And oh, how blessed it is to possess *this* understanding !—to understand that there *is* *loving-kindness* in all the doings of the Lord, and especially in His *afflictive dispensations* ! And this blessedness comes from a *wise observation* of passing events.

I have been led to these reflections in consequence of being called to the bedside of a gentleman on whose constitution pulmonary disease has already made great encroachments ; and whose case, so far as it is yet developed, appears to me to merit something more particular and more permanent than a few ephemeral

expressions of hope or of thankfulness. And I write to you on the subject, because the love which dwells in your heart to the souls of poor sinners, and to their Saviour, gives me the assurance of awakening your christian sympathies in behalf of Mr. Howell, and of securing your prayers, that God may more and more prosper my intercourse with him.

Mr. Howell has been at Torre with his family since the autumn. It is only within the last few weeks that he removed down to Torquay for greater warmth, and he took the house called Beulah, next to Trinity Church, in the hope of Mrs. Howell getting some pupils. I had heard a good deal said among my friends about this family, as their circumstances excited commiseration; but I had not met with them, nor had I intended calling, as my circle of acquaintance is already sufficiently large. Our excellent friend Dr. Tetley, however, came in to see me one evening last week, and made so earnest a request, that I could not refuse promising to visit Mr. Howell. The doctor said his patient was now confined to his bed, and feared he was rapidly sinking. Mr. Blackmore had seen him frequently, so long as he remained at Torre; and Mr. Fayle has called several times since he came to Beulah. But now Mr. Fayle's time and attention were absorbed in the dangerous illness of his wife, and Mr. Blackmore was from home

on business. This was a plea for my trying to supply their place. Moreover, the doctor represented the sick man's state of mind as peculiarly standing in need of spiritual counsel and encouragement. He knew the dangerous nature of his malady; and he was alive to the importance of salvation. But he did not seem to have an experimental knowledge of that one way of a sinner's acceptance with God which the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ reveals. The clergymen who had visited him faithfully directed him to the Saviour, and urged him to rest his hopes on Christ alone. This he complained he could not do. He confessed it was what was right, and what, indeed, he desired; but he could not believe, and he felt himself without comfort, because he was without hope. It was manifest, however, that he was an earnest and anxious inquirer after gospel truth, from many circumstances, and, amongst others, from the effect produced upon him by the doctor's repeating some little remark he had heard from my lips, on one occasion last winter, in a time of serious illness. This was the connecting link between Mr. Howell and me. His desire was to see me, and now my desire was to see him.

I had called at the door both on Friday and Saturday; but on Sunday, after the morning service, I was for the first time admitted. Mr. Howell was in bed. I had never happened to see him until now,

and assuredly the first impression made upon me will not soon be effaced. There was the stamp of superior intelligence on his countenance; there was more than that;—there was dignity of character, combined with great benignity: whilst his hazel eyes, and long dark eyelashes;—his capacious brow, crowned with a profusion of jet black locks; and the scarlet scarf that was loosely twisted round his neck, gave me the idea of what is generally designated *genius*. I had been told he was a clever and very accomplished man, and now I could not doubt it; and the miniature picture I have sketched will help your conception of his appearance, and perhaps increase your interest in him.

We entered at once into important conversation; and I spent at his bedside as interesting an hour as you and I once did with a poor man in the garden of Cury Vicarage. We seemed to know each other, and this inspired that kind of mutual confidence which is requisite for free and profitable intercourse. He shewed no taste for idle words. The public worship of God, in which I had been privileged to engage, and from which he had been detained, furnished a natural topic to begin with. The sermon I had heard preached brought us more directly to his own views and prospects; and we were now eagerly occupied with the fundamental truths of the Gospel. Howell spoke with great

kindness of the christian friends who had so assiduously visited and instructed him. He confessed that his understanding went along with their statements, but that his heart remained untouched. There was something very touching to me in this confession, and I felt that it lay with the Holy Spirit to work upon his heart. At the same time, as the Spirit works by means of the revealed word, the duty which devolved on me was, with the utmost simplicity, to unfold to him "the truth as it is in Jesus," secretly praying that the Spirit of Truth might take of the things of Jesus, and apply them with power to the heart of this earnest inquirer.

Now, my dear brother, I must mention it as a singular coincidence, that in the prosecution of my work on Doubts, I had been meditating much for the previous fortnight on *imperfect* and *inaccurate views* of the PERSON of *Christ*, as one of the causes out of which *doubts* arise, and had just completed a letter on the subject. •My mind was strongly impressed with the conviction, that many people who are anxious for salvation are kept in a state of anxiety, without experiencing peace or joy in believing, because they look to *the work* which Christ has accomplished, without duly considering the peculiar and wonderful constitution of *His Person* as EMMANUEL, "God with us," which alone fitted him for the work which he undertook as our Deliverer from sin, and death, and

hell. And, therefore, by way of laying a good and solid foundation, I deemed it advisable fully to explain the doctrine of the incarnation of the Son of God.

You can imagine the ground over which we travelled together, and the various texts of Scripture to which reference was made.* It would fill several pages, were I to attempt an outline of what passed. But it was extremely gratifying to observe how completely the subject arrested his attention, and with what quickness he seized on the true humanity of our Lord, as connecting him with us, and securing his sympathy, and altogether qualifying him to act as our surety. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah satisfied him that the sufferings of the Saviour were both sacrificial and substitutionary. Jehovah laid the

* Mrs. Howell has informed me that her husband constantly referred to this conversation on the humanity of our Saviour with peculiar satisfaction. He always said it was the opening up of this subject that led him, by God's blessing, to a distinct knowledge of the Gospel. She has expressed a wish that the conversation had been more fully preserved in the letter. A clerical friend, also, to whom the MS. was shewn, and whose judgment is entitled to the highest respect, thought it might have been useful to others had the subject been expanded, and some of the principal texts submitted to the consideration of the reader. For these reasons a few additional particulars will be found in an Appendix, as they are too long for a note.

iniquity of us all on his righteous servant; and on that account he was wounded, and bruised, and poured out his soul unto death. And now Mr. Howell saw, in a light he had never done before, how his wonderful punishment of sin in the person of Christ depended on his taking upon him our nature; and, again, that our deliverance from the punishment to which, as sinners, we are exposed, depends upon what the incarnate Son of God has done in our stead. Of course we conversed about the divinity of our Lord also, and the union of the two distinct natures in his one person, without which he could not have been the Mediator between God and man, nor could the shedding of his blood have been effectual for the remission of sins. But on the divinity of the Saviour I found him well established. The reality, and the importance, and the necessity of his humanity, had burst upon him with all the power and freshness of a new subject. He said it had never before been so fully and plainly opened up to him; and the satisfaction it afforded him was still more manifestly displayed in the expressions of his countenance than in the language he employed. It was truly delightful to mark the avidity with which he drank in the truth, as I was enabled to state it, and how the truth commended itself to his conscience. His teachableness struck me very particularly. There was no disposition to start objections, nor any of that captiousness which one

has so often to encounter in dealing with men of talent; on the contrary, he rejoiced at God's word "as one that findeth great spoil."

It is a sure step in advance towards the attainment of christian peace, hope, and joy, when a person, under the consciousness of guilt, and with enlightened views of the holiness of the divine character and of the gospel scheme of salvation, makes the discovery how sin is effectually punished, and yet the sinner himself is eternally saved. It removes difficulties which appeared to him to have been insurmountable, and imparts a satisfying blessedness to his soul, when he beholds how "God is just," and at the same time the "justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." And I thankfully cherished the persuasion, that these were the circumstances into which Howell was brought. "The wind bloweth where it listeth;" and the Spirit of God worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth.

Our conversation had ranged over a variety of topics; all of them aided in pointing out in what the Gospel salvation consisted, and how it has been freely procured for us, and the means by which its inestimable blessings become ours. But the one centre from whence all these topics emanated, and into which they all again converged, was "*God manifested in the flesh.*" This is declared by the inspired apostle to be "the great mystery of godliness," because it

explains how infinitely God hates him, and how marvellously he has loved his sinful creatures. And it seemed to me that Howell understood this mystery, and believed it, and felt its life-giving power.

You will not accuse me either of presumption or enthusiasm when I express my conviction, that the Holy Spirit had equally guided me in speaking and him in hearing, and that there was and would be a blessing. We did not separate without kneeling at the footstool of the throne of grace, and asking from the God of all grace, in the name of our glorified High-Priest, that measure of blessing which should redound to his own glory.

I did not find it convenient to call yesterday, nor did it seem to be necessary ; but in the evening, about nine o'clock, just as I had concluded family worship with the friends who lodge in the same house with me, the door-bell rang, and Mrs. Howell was ushered in. She had come at the solicitations of her husband, who had been labouring for some hours under deep distress of mind, and wished particularly to see me. The call of duty was imperative. I instantly accompanied her. On entering his bedchamber, Howell flung out his arm across the bed, and grasped my hand with a cordiality and firmness that spoke more powerfully than words how thankful he was to see me. But he could not

speaking, and his fine countenance was expressive of inward agony: it was quite an appalling spectacle. I silently gazed upon him for a minute or two, and then said, "God is our refuge in every time of distress and trouble. Before we attempt to converse with each other, we had best cast ourselves upon God. If you please, we will pray for his presence with us, for his guidance, his deliverance, and for his blessing." The distressed man signified his approval. During the prayer, which had a special reference to his case, it was very affecting to be continually interrupted with his whispered "Yes, yes!" "Amen, Amen!" joined with the sobs and responses of his wife. We were very earnest in our supplications; and while we were yet speaking, it happened to us, as to Daniel of old, that God heard, and answered. Indeed, I never was so sensible of an immediate answer to prayer. On rising from my knees, and opening my eyes on Howell, I found him greatly soothed. His countenance had regained its usual placidity: and from a low and feeble voice, in which at first he spoke, by degrees he gathered strength and animation. He mentioned how great his enjoyment of spiritual comfort had been after my visit on Sunday. He acknowledged that he never in all his life had experienced such pure happiness; it was like an anticipation of the joys of heaven. This elevated state of religious feeling continued uninterrupted the whole of

Sunday afternoon and evening, during the midnight hours, and throughout the forenoon of Monday. The excitement connected with this great and joyful change had borne hard on his debilitated frame. As the day advanced, he sank into great exhaustion; and, amidst this weakness of body, what he described as "a cloud of horrible darkness" enveloped his mind. He could not believe anything. The truths which had been the joy and rejoicing of his heart vanished from his hold like unsubstantial shadows. All his hopes and consolations had suddenly fled. And so terrible was the inward conflict to which he had been subjected, that he used the liberty of sending for me.

I listened to this narrative with intense interest. It taught me that a real work, and a great work, was going forward in this sick man's soul. The good Spirit of heaven had watered the good seed, which had already sprung up, and was bringing forth the holy fruits of love and joy, and peace. And the wicked one had been attempting, not merely to blight and blast, but to uproot and destroy. I could regard the "cloud of horrible darkness" in no other light than that of Satanic temptation. Howell's experience enabled him to say with the Psalmist, "The entrance of thy words giveth light." His inquisitive and highly cultivated mind had just been gratified by a wonderful accession of knowledge, and of that kind of knowledge which

was far more precious than rubies to a dying man. This cast a bright gleam of sunshine around his path and his prospects, and made him happy ; but "the Prince of Darkness" used his crafts and assaults to extinguish the heavenly light, and to counteract the good work of the Holy Spirit. For a time, it would appear, he had succeeded ; but the "terrible conflict" which agonised the mind of Howell was a very satisfactory proof how highly he prized that light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, with which God had shone upon him, and how ardently he desired its continuance, and how intensely he was affected by its temporary withdrawal. This, I doubt not, will appear to you, as it did to me, to evidence his sincerity in seeking after Gospel truth, and the unspeakable value he attached to its possession. And, painful as this conflict was, I believe it was a wisely permitted stroke of discipline to remind my new friend that it was not by dint of his own application, nor in the exercise of his own natural abilities, that he had acquired the knowledge of salvation, so neither could he of himself retain what God in sovereign mercy had imparted. This was a most useful lesson to him at the commencement of his new career as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.*

* Since the death of her husband, Mrs. Howell has explained to me, that the distress into which he sank on this occasion, and the darkness which overspread his mind, was

I sat beside him till half-past ten o'clock. It is vain to argue with people who are in the distressing condition in which I found Howell. I briefly stated to him what I have just stated to you, as my opinion of the origin and design of the dark cloud which had frowned upon him. I thankfully observed that its blackness was already somewhat brightened ; and instead of making his own distress the subject of conversation, I asked for a Bible, and read a portion of the sixth chapter of St. John. The introduction of light is the only way to dispel darkness. The word of God is the word of the Spirit, and that is the weapon

connected with deep conviction of sin. As she sat by him, endeavouring to administer comfort, he complained that he could not remember what had been said to him the day before : he could not keep hold of it. And, suddenly throwing both his hands upon his head, he exclaimed, "*Oh ! I have been a great sinner !*" and the tears rolled down his cheeks. Under this overwhelming sense of sin, he lost hope, and became disconsolate. Mrs. Howell was overwhelmed too. She felt there was something beyond her power to mitigate or remove ; and in these painful circumstances they both thought of applying to me.

I am still of opinion that Howell's spiritual darkness and distress were the work of our "adversary, the devil, who, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." The conviction of sin is the province and the prerogative of God's own Spirit, who is called "the Comforter," and whose special work it is to lighten our darkness. And that Howell's

wherewith we shall most surely scare away all spiritual enemies. We spoke of the Son of God as the alone food of an immortal soul—the bread of life—of which, if a man eat, he shall never hunger. This supplied sublime materials for thought, and placed before him the true object of that faith which sanctifies and saves. We spoke also with considerable largeness on the repeated declarations of our Lord respecting the “will of the Father,”—see verses 35–40. To do *that will* the Son became incarnate; and in the accomplishment of *that will* sinners become the heirs of eternal life. This led us to the fountain-head of convictions should have been so deep and so overwhelming is peculiarly satisfactory. It is strictly consistent with his high conscientiousness, and his strong love of truth. Whenever he saw sin to be sinful, he utterly loathed it; and when he felt himself to be a sinner, he sank into the very depths of sorrow and self-abasement. He was tempted to look away from Christ at the time he most needed him, and hence his distress. But he was a man of the greatest natural amiability, and his moral character was unblemished in the sight of men. This was a snare out of which he must be brought. It was necessary that he should see his own sinfulness in the sight of God; and I doubt not that his experience that evening prepared the way for his more thoroughly appreciating “the great salvation.”

This fact, which Mrs. Howell has communicated, adds interest to the narrative, and furnishes another evidence of the reality of that “repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,” which her husband experienced and exhibited.

God's love. Here was a theme of fathomless depth and of immeasurable height. Salvation was wholly to be ascribed to sovereign grace, a doctrine most humbling to the proud, the self-conceited, and the self-righteous; but, at the same time, most encouraging to the anxious inquirer and to the humble penitent. "Whosoever cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

Thus we talked on and on, and the disconsolate man forgot his sorrows. We talked of Christ, and "the light of life" began to shine upon him: we still talked of Christ, and he found him to be his nourishment and strength, his balm and consolation.

When I left Howell his mind was as tranquil and peaceful as could be desired. I retired praising God for his goodness. This morning I have not seen him, but the answer returned to a message of inquiry was that he had had some refreshing sleep, and felt comfortable. He requested me not to call till the afternoon, as that is the time of day he is apt to sink, and it is the time when his wife is obliged to leave him.

I feel pretty confident that the perusal of this letter will not exhaust your patience, and that, so far from complaining of its great length, you will desire the receipt of another. You may expect to hear again in a few days; meantime let me entreat you to

pray for dear Howell, that he may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Pray also for me, that I may be divinely guided in all my intercourse with this interesting and hopeful invalid, so as to be, in the hand of God, an instrument of good to his precious soul.

And now adieu. May the light of God's countenance ever cheer you onward amidst all present ailments and all ministerial obstacles.

Believe me most affectionately, &c.

P.S. I should be sorry if I have expressed myself so as to impress you with the idea that the happy effect produced on Howell's mind was attributable to my having stated truths with which he was previously altogether unacquainted. We know very well that before the natural man can really understand the Scriptures, his understanding must be opened. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, and I believe the Spirit did work with Howell during my conversation with him, and by means of those particular truths on which we conversed. I believe the Spirit worked on these occasions with a power which this earnest inquirer had not before experienced. Thus it was that he no longer complained of inability to believe. *His understanding was opened*; and because he understood the truth, he believed it; and because he believed it, he was made a partaker of its divine consolations.

LETTER II.

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To the Rev. JOHN STEVENSON, Cury Vicarage.

Torquay, December 2, 1843.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I know that my letter of last Tuesday will have awakened your interest in Mr. Howell, and that you will be pleased to have some further details of his case.

On Tuesday, after dinner, I sat at his bedside for an hour and a half. We were entirely alone, as Mrs. Howell is engaged in teaching in the afternoon. I found him beautifully composed. He had had no return of spiritual darkness or distress. He had been occupied with much reflection on the truths which were stated to him on the previous day; and I could easily perceive how great had been his progress in the comprehension of divine things under the teaching of the Holy Spirit. I ought to inform you, that naturally he is of a very reflective turn of mind; he is a deep

thinker on every subject that catches his attention ; and at present he certainly manifests an extraordinary degree of inquisitiveness and docility in regard to the truths of the Gospel.

Of his own accord, and almost immediately on my being seated, he referred to our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, as recorded in St. John, chap. iii., and expressed his conviction that the being "born again," which our Lord declares to be indispensable to admission into the kingdom of heaven, must mean some thorough and radical change in a man's views and character. "But," he added, "when such a change *is* effected, don't you think there will be the consciousness of it?" I saw that in propounding this question he had himself in view ; and, therefore, with the desire of satisfying his mind on this very practical point, I explained our natural condition as alienated from God and from holiness, having neither understanding of divine things nor relish for them ; and as there were at least some people to be found in every place who *now* delighted in God and in his service, and who did have a knowledge both of the evil nature of sin and of the salvation which is by Jesus Christ our Lord, it was obvious that a great change *had* passed on them. I spoke of what is called CONVERSION as a reality, which is only scorned or laughed at by those who are strangers to it ; and I mentioned that there were still such things as

sudden conversions, although, in general, the work went on gradually, as from the morning dawn to perfect day. I dwelt on the case of Saul of Tarsus at some length, and the whole circumstances riveted his attention. I then said, "In reference to yourself, it appears to me that, although the work has not been so instantaneous or complete, nor accompanied with any miraculous lights or sounds, yet *you* have nevertheless undergone a change, similar in its object and tendency to that which made the blasphemer of the name of Jesus, and the cruel murderer of his saints, one of his most faithful and devoted servants. You *now* know and acknowledge that Jesus is your Lord and your God, and from the desire to serve him your language is much the same as that of the newly converted Saul, 'Lord! what wilt thou have me to do?'" To this discourse and its application to himself he listened with unbroken silence. His expressive countenance indicated how carefully he was pondering every sentence. At last he said, "I do feel that a great change has taken place." It seemed an effort to make this acknowledgment, but from the moment it was made he has continued to bless God for his wondrous mercy and forbearance towards him.

I cannot tell you how great was my happiness when the poor dying man ceased to complain of inability to believe that Christ had died for him, and of doubt respecting his own salvation. It was a release from

captivity, and brought him into the enjoyment of "the glorious liberty of the sons of God," when he confessed himself to be a partaker of the grace that is in Christ Jesus ;—when he openly acknowledged that there was such a change in his own religious views, and feelings, and desires, as testified the truth of his having been "born from above." This was a mighty step in advance ; for, so soon as he felt the quickening power of christian principles, and professed faith in Jesus Christ as his own Saviour, his heart became warm with love to that Saviour who had *first* loved him, and *so* loved him. And as it is true that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," so the lips of Howell were opened to "shew forth the praises of Him who had called him out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pet. ii. 9).

He now began to give me a sketch of his former life. From a child, he said, he had felt an inordinate thirst for knowledge of all kinds. Of course he had studied hard in the way of his profession,*and even after he was established in practice, his ardour in the prosecution of literature and science was unabated. He rose early and sat up late ; and, with shame and sorrow, he confessed that the Sunday had been too often spent in his laboratory, making experiments in chemistry. Sometimes he went to church, but he did not go as a humble and devout worshipper ; the object in view was generally to

hear some celebrated preacher. He also read books of theology, and had a particular liking for controversial divinity; but it was merely to enlarge his stock of knowledge. All this time he lived free from those gross vices in which he saw others around him indulging. He was opposed to scepticism, to materialism, to Unitarianism. In the application of his intellectual powers to philosophical and scientific pursuits he thought he was living a rational life, and he was very well pleased with himself. About a year ago, from overworking both mind and body, he began to break down; there were symptoms of tenderness in the chest. He took the advice of Dr. Morgan, in Bath, who was a pious man, and with whom he had been accustomed to converse on religious subjects. Howell went on to say, "The doctor used always to be dropping some little word of instruction or warning, and it had all the more weight with me as I knew him to be a sincere and consistent character. At the same time, nothing he said made any deep or lasting impression on me. My mind was still engrossed with my favourite studies, and towards the latter end of May I came to Torquay for change of climate. There, in the house of the Rev. Mr. Statham, with whom I had some acquaintance through the introduction of a friend, I met with Dr. Tetley, and in this way I was induced to ask his professional advice. I found him just such a man as Dr. Morgan. He shewed me

great kindness, and took every opportunity of directing me to the Saviour. And now I can see how much there was of the goodness of God in casting me into the hands of these pious physicians. Surely it was God's own doing."

Howell remained at Torquay, and recovered his health amazingly. He returned to Bath to resume his practice. He found a great arrear of work. He devoted himself too intensely to his multifarious pursuits; and he had not been home more than five or six weeks when his health was again very seriously impaired. As the result of a consultation, he was now ordered to break up his establishment entirely, and retire for three years to a genial climate. Torquay had done so much for him before, that he came back in August, bringing his family with him; but, instead of recovering as formerly, he has gradually been losing ground.

Poor fellow! at the conclusion of this little history, he honestly admitted that the first chastisement of his heavenly Father had not been severe enough. Had he been able to prosecute his medical profession, he felt assured that the warning he had received would have been lost upon him; that he would have forgotten God, and continued to neglect his salvation. Now he blesses God for withdrawing him from the snares of science and of human knowledge; remarking, however, and very justly, that the pursuit of

knowledge is in itself laudable ; but in his case it had been carried to an extent which he now saw to have been sinful, inasmuch as it excluded higher objects from that attention they deserve. The knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, is forced upon him as of paramount importance. And *now* this is the department of knowledge which engages his uncommonly active and intelligent mind.

That afternoon, instead of spending time in further explanation of what the Gospel is (which I had largely done on Sunday and Monday), I spoke of its effects ; of the peace of mind and peace with God which it yields ; of the holy joy, and animating hopes, with which it fills the soul ; of its power to purify the heart from the love of sin, to strengthen us for duty, to support us under trial, and to administer abundant consolation amidst all the afflictions of life. In short, I shewed how it brings us into fellowship with God, and both disposes and enables us to live to his glory, as reasonable, and responsible, and immortal, and redeemed creatures. It would have rejoiced your heart to see how readily and cheerfully he responded to all that was said. He had the happy *consciousness* that these were in some measure the effects which the belief of the Gospel was producing on himself. You will recollect what St. Paul says, in writing to the Colossians, of their faith in Jesus Christ bringing

forth fruit, since the day they heard and knew the grace of God in truth (Col. i. 3—6). The fruit begins immediately with the faith. Thus it was with Howell, and he felt himself as in a new world. We had much elevated and interesting conversation on the mysteries of grace, and on the wonders of redeeming love ; and, when we addressed the God of salvation in prayer, there was a great call for thanksgiving in connection with our supplications. I left him all animation, and very happy.

On Wednesday afternoon I again sat with him for upwards of an hour and a half. His progress in the divine life was still more marked : his observations were deeply experimental, and his whole temper and spirit were heavenly in a high degree. During the preceding part of the day he had suffered much bodily distress, but his mind was perfectly tranquil. I had recommended the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians to his serious perusal, as expressing very sublime views of the Saviour, and of all God's works as centering in him. He thanked me repeatedly for directing him to this portion of Holy Scripture. He said it had given rise to the loftiest thoughts that had ever passed through his mind, and had filled him with wonder. During my lengthened visit he never once complained of uneasiness or discomfort, although fomentations were being applied all the time. The high and holy exercise of his noble faculties, on the

noblest of all themes, seemed to drown or to drive away pain ; and, when I made a movement for departure, he took me by the hand and said he never could thank me enough, *et cætera*. Before engaging in prayer, he requested me to make it one petition to God, that the work begun in him might go on. He desired its continuity above all things, and solemnly avowed his purpose, should his life be spared, to live only to God. We spoke of his wife, who, to his unspeakable comfort, evinces fellowship with him in his present feelings and experience ; and also of his three babes, whom we would earnestly instruct in the ways of God ; and of many other things, which were all proofs and specimens of that "newness of life" into which he had entered. Oh ! my dear brother, this was a sweet season, when both of us experienced something of that burning of the heart which the two disciples felt when Jesus walked with them on the way to Emmaus, and while he opened to them the prophetic Scriptures concerning his sufferings and his glory.

On Thursday the continued happiness he inwardly enjoyed caused him to feel better, as it respected his bodily ailments. I believe it was more a matter of *feeling* than any real amendment. But in him there was at this time a literal fulfilment of the scriptural declaration, "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah, viii. 10).

I spent part of the afternoon with him as usual. He had been reading the Epistle to the Ephesians with great delight. His wife and he both remarked, that they saw much in it that they had never seen before ; indeed, it was like something altogether new to them. I had mentioned this epistle on a previous day as well fitted to engage and gratify the reflective mind of Howell, and to lead him into the very heights and depths of man's redemption. I read and commented on the remarkable prayer offered up by St. Paul for his Ephesian converts, and which is recorded in chap. iii. 14—21.

This day Howell had been so full of holy joy, that he regretted his inability to sing ; but, at his own request, his wife had read to him the thirty-fourth Psalm, as a song of praise. Even in health he never could sing ; but it was singularly pleasing to learn that he considered the singing of psalms as the natural expression of religious joy (James, v. 13).

Yesterday (Friday) the dear invalid suffered great bodily discomfort, and laboured under much exhaustion. This unfavourable change did not surprise me, seeing his mind had been so much exercised ; and somewhat under excitement, for several days ; but he had neither clouds nor doubts to disturb his peace, or to obscure his prospects. He complained, however, of confusion and stupidity, resulting from the amount of opiate to which he had necessarily

been subjected. He told me he had had "a glorious night." His sleep had been very refreshing to him, and during the intervals, when awake, his meditations had been sweet.

When I went to see him about four o'clock (my customary hour), I found Mrs. Howell at home, in consequence of his requiring more than usual nursing. She was administering some nourishment. He was extremely languid, but, by degrees, revived a little. I read various short portions of Scripture, and made observations on them, and rather discouraged his attempts to enter into conversation. But God's truth commended itself to his heart and conscience; he felt its power and its comfort. I have never witnessed greater desire to hear, or more delight in hearing, or such a quick perception of divine realities. There were no cavils, no objections, no difficulties. Although in one sense he was but a "babe in Christ," yet he seems all at once to have reached a spiritual manhood. Many of his remarks were such as could only have been expected from a christian of established character and ripened experience. With the utmost propriety he might adopt the prophet's language addressed to his God, "Thy word was found of me, and I did eat it, and it was the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jer. xv. 16). Texts were occasionally brought to his remembrance, which he had read or heard in the days of his ignorance of their meaning,

and many times he has expressed great satisfaction to find me uttering exactly the same things as his kind friend, Dr. Morgan, at Bath had done. This he considered as a proof that the same Spirit taught the same truths to all the children of God. In listening to his remarks, so spiritual and experimental, and in looking on his countenance so brightened with the gladness which pervaded his inner man, I was induced to compare the blessed alteration in his religious state to that of the grovelling grub which has become a winged insect. He had burst the shell, and escaped from a chrysalis condition : his soul, now emancipated from the dark prison-house of ignorance and unbelief, was soaring above sublunary things on the newly expanded wings of faith and hope, and basking in the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. This idea charmed him exceedingly, from his peculiar fondness for natural science. He said it was a beautiful idea ; and he rocked his head on the pillow, and almost wept with delight. He acknowledged that for some time previous to this recent change he must have had spiritual life, but it was in a manner *dormant*.

This has been a memorable week in Howell's history. I remained nearly two hours with him ; but so intensely was he interested in divine things, that he could not suppose it possible my visit had been half so long. He was now elevated in spirit, and his mode of address had become very animated, and yet he was

quite patient and submissive to the will of God. Before kneeling for a parting prayer, he desired me to thank God for the present revival,—he meant the relief he experienced at that moment from the languor and uneasiness of the former part of the day, and the spiritual refreshment and happiness he was enjoying.

This day (Saturday) I have not as yet seen him, but am informed he has passed a quiet and comfortable night. Mrs. Howell has been taken ill. She has had a great deal of anxiety, nor has she been wholly exempt from excitement. Dr. Tetley, however, thinks she will soon be well again, and that her husband, to all human appearance, may survive for eight or ten days. Until this day I have never happened to meet the doctor since he asked me to call on Howell. He is much engaged, and has been frequently out of the town to see country patients. He had no leisure to talk about Howell's case; but, on mentioning to him that I was writing to you on the subject, he sends christian love, and suggests that it might be well to preserve this letter, and the former one, as there is no other record of God's gracious dealings with this dying man.

I am sorry to understand that the family is in very straitened circumstances. Mrs. Howell does sometimes advert to this; and, having been accustomed to tuition before her marriage, is now desirous of getting pupils. But Howell himself has never touched upon

that subject with me. He has got possession of "the true riches," and with that durable treasure he is satisfied.

* * * * *

I shall write again ere long ; meantime believe me,
in the love of the Spirit,

Yours, *

LETTER III.

To the Rev. J. STEVENSON.

Torquay, December 15, 1843.

MY BELOVED FRIEND,

* * * * *

With respect to Mr. Howell, he, too, is still alive, and he lives to God. I may say he lives with God; for all his thoughts are directed to divine subjects, and on them alone he delights to converse.

Last week, however, was a kind of blank in his spiritual history. I visited him daily, but owing to the causes mentioned in my last hurried note to you, we had little intercommunion. The diarrhœa was very severe. He suffered much from exhaustion, and the necessary opiates stupified him. Although unable for long visits, he was always glad to have prayer made for him, and generally expressed something or

another, either to be asked of God, or to be acknowledged with thanksgiving.

I really thought he was entering into the dark valley of the shadow of death, and despaired of renewing the sweet and interesting intercourse we had had together. In these apprehensions, however, I was mistaken : Mr. Howell has enjoyed some respite from bodily distress : and, although I cannot say that the progress of his disease has been arrested, or that there is the least hope of recovery, still he *feels* himself better, and once more his intelligent mind is all activity.

One afternoon (I think it was on Tuesday), on inquiring how he felt himself, he said, "Oh, thank God ! I am very comfortable. I have had a glorious night, and I have also had a glorious day. During the night I had several hours of the sweetest sleep that could be ; and, during the day, I have been reflecting on the subject to which you directed my attention last evening. I see that there is a reality, and an assurance, and an *actuality* in God's word of promise, which invites me to rest upon it ; and this inspires me with hope." This prologue was followed by much important conversation. The subject to which I had directed his attention on the previous evening was Heb. vi. 16-20,—“For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing

more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath ; That, by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us : which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail ; whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high-priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." This passage I had read and commented on. It was exactly one of those passages likely to give his mind some employment, and to strengthen his faith ; and recollecting the use I had made of it when writing " On the Pernicious Influence of Doubts in checking and blighting our Hopes for Eternity." I carried the MS. to him, and read a few pages of it. He listened with interest. He said it cheered him, and desired me to leave it. At the same time I left with him a beautiful tract, entitled " The Bliss of Heaven," which I had that day received from Major Hall. I think he stated it had been recommended to him by Archdeacon Hare.

The next time I saw Howell, a new symptom of disease had manifested itself. He complained of a sore throat, and was just preparing to apply a blister. I had not seen him for a day or two, and observed that there was now an air of great thoughtfulness

about him. I could read in his expressive countenance that something pressed upon his mind which was impairing his wonted peace and joy. I inquired if he had been able to look at the MS. He replied that he had perused the first half of it with great care and pleasure, and he felt convinced of the sinfulness of doubts, as throwing discredit on the word and promise of God. He added, "I know, also, from what I experience, that doubts will spring up unbidden, even when I am endeavouring to repress them; and they always have a darkening and deadening effect. I suppose they may be ascribed, in some measure, to the weakness under which I am labouring; and, perhaps, there is something of temptation in them." Remarks like these shew how much his mind is exercised, and how personal his religion is, and how very correctly he judges of things which are entirely new to him.

You can imagine in what way I attempted to restore the stability of his faith, which I perceived had been a little shaken. He then alluded to the tract: Mrs. Howell had read it to him on the evening after my departure. He spoke of it with rapture. He had since read it himself when alone. It had supplied him with heavenly meditations by night and by day. In speaking of it he said, "I see that to be with Christ, or to have Christ with us, is heaven. The place where is of inferior moment. There may be

heaven on earth. This observation struck me forcibly. How true! and what a delightful truth! and how seldom realised! It furnished me with a fine text, on which I expatiated for some time. But Howell was not elevated by the subject; he looked grave. At last, after some hesitation, he remarked, "I admit the truth of all you have advanced; there must be bliss in heaven, and it is delightful to hear about it. I see, also, that there is neither heaven nor bliss for us without Christ; and my own reflections, suggested by this little tract, and by your conversations, have been most soothing, and at all times, most elevating to me. But, admitting all this, I cannot subdue a continually rising idea, *that it is premature in a person like me to entertain the hope of this bliss.* All my former pursuits have been so exclusively of a worldly character, and my whole life has been marked by such forgetfulness of God, and indifference to the salvation which is by our Lord Jesus Christ, that I wish for your opinion whether I am not deceiving myself in this matter."

To this humble and conscientious statement I listened with the deepest interest. It was evidently uttered with reluctance, and yet the uttering of it was a relief to him. You will regard it as a fine example of that honesty and truthfulness, of which there is so large a preponderance in his natural character, and which affords such excellent materials for "the Spirit of Truth" to work withal. I looked at him with car-

nestness, and, instead of entering upon any discussion, simply put the question, "Do you, as a poor, perishing sinner, really, from the heart, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?" "Oh, yes!" he replied, and looked somewhat surprised at my putting such a question to him. "Are you sure you are not deceiving yourself in this? Have you *the consciousness* of believing in him, and trusting on him, as the Son of God, and the Saviour of sinners?" "I am perfectly conscious of doing so. *I am as conscious of believing in Christ as I am of being alive.*" "Well, then, my friend, it is your faith in Christ, which the grace of God enables you to exercise, that gives you a relish for the bliss of heaven; and this relish is a preparation for it. You never could prepare yourself, even by a long life of repentance and prayer, and such other services as are in your power to render. It is of importance to keep full in view that Christ is your SAVIOUR, and not your *helper*. Your admission into heaven, and bliss depends not on a joint work to be performed by him and by you. Remember the words of St. Paul,—'*By the grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.*' (Eph. ii. 8, 9). Salvation is wholly of God's own free grace. *It is all his gift*; even the faith in us, through which we come to the enjoyment of it. Whenever he gives us grace to believe, it cannot be *premature* to hope for what is promised and provided. And there must be a turn-

ing point in the history of every man, who is brought out of the darkness of his natural condition into the marvellous light of the Gospel. I believe *you have passed that point.*" Here he interrupted me, and said, with eagerness, "I see it—I see it. I am sensible that the whole state of my views and feelings, in regard to religion, have undergone a great change; but I only fear I might be indulging a false hope."

To find . . . maintaining such a watchfulness over himself filled me with secret joy, and made me the more anxious desirous to explain his warrant to participate in all the blessings of the Gospel salvation at once, and without delay. I quoted the words of our Lord,—“He that believeth on the Son *hath everlasting life*; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him:” and then, “He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, *hath everlasting life*, and shall not come into condemnation, *he is passed from death unto life*” (John iii. 36. v. 24). These precious sayings set the whole Gospel before him, under the one term, LIFE; and it was deserving of special notice, that this life is enjoyed in immediate and present connection with faith. He that believeth *hath* life; the life which is everlasting begins *now*; it begins the moment we believe in Christ; this life is in him, and received from him; he himself is our life. “And

you," I added, "who lately were 'dead in trespasses and sins,' as you read in the Epistle to the Ephesians, have been *quicken*ed together with Christ, and raised up to 'newness of life.' The work is done; your very faith, of which you are conscious, is a proof of it. It is, in fact, the effect of this new and everlasting life having been imparted to you. Your faith, therefore, ought to keep you in possession of life, and to give you the enjoyment of it; and I would not have you, on any account, to doubt the reality of the work which God has been so graciously carrying on." "No," he answered, "I ought not to doubt,—and, indeed, I cannot doubt it; but, if you will forgive me using the expression, I thought that your *theory of salvation* was too simple—*it seems too easy a way of getting to heaven.*"

Thus we got upon new ground, and I was drawn into a new discourse. I spoke of the simplicity which distinguishes all the works of God, as contrasted with the complexity of human contrivances, and, as an eminent naturalist, he caught the spirit of this remark, and felt its weight. On every principle of analogy, the simplicity of the Gospel plan of salvation, so far from constituting an objection against it, is an evidence in favour of its divine origin. *What creature ever could have contrived it?* "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." What work so great, so difficult, as the salvation of

sinners? and yet what inimitable simplicity in the means of obtaining it! But then we must not think only of the simple faith which is required of us: we must think who is THE PERSON on whom we believe. We must think on an INCARNATE God,—and, oh! what a thought is that! We must think on all that the Lord Jesus Christ has done and suffered to procure the remission of our sins, and the sanctification of our hearts, and, in one word, the enjoyment of what the Bible so emphatically calls LIFE. Such thoughts teach us that the effect produced, however great it is, has an adequate cause. And, besides, I urged him never to forget, that our salvation is not in our faith, but in the Saviour in whom we believe. Simple faith on our part is what God has prescribed as the one means or medium through which we come to enjoy the freely provided salvation. This is fitted to humble our proud and self-righteous hearts: it continually reminds us that we have done, and can do, nothing to deliver our own souls from the guilt we have contracted, and from the punishment we deserve: it keeps us sensible of our infinite obligations to sovereign mercy, and gives all the glory to God, &c. &c. “Thus you see,” I continued, “that there is no defect in what you designate ‘the theory of salvation.’ It bears upon all its parts the impress of divine skill, as well as of divine love. And may I not refer to yourself as an illustration of its practical

working? You tell me every day how peaceful and composed your mind is. You feel relieved from the load of anxiety, respecting the pardon of sin, which pressed so heavily on your spirits; and you acknowledge that, of late, you have experienced a happiness to which you had all your life before been a stranger." "True, very true," he exclaimed. "All this," I resumed, "is the natural result of that faith in the Saviour which you are conscious of exercising. It is the actings of the new life which has been bestowed on you; it is the commencings of that salvation which is to be *eternal*." "Yes," he replied, "I see what you mean; and, certainly, *I do feel as if I were just beginning to live*."

Some of Mr. Howell's admirable little sayings I have recorded verbatim. I know you will appreciate their power. And the substance of what passed between us, at this interview, has been sketched with sufficient minuteness to enable you to fill up the details in your own mind. The subjects handled were very important; but I should not omit to mention that I adopted the method of confirming every doctrinal assertion by Scriptural examples. Thus, for instance, in obviating his mistaken conceptions of the *simplicity* of the Gospel salvation, I referred him to the case of Naaman, the Syrian, who came to Elisha to be healed of his leprosy. That diseased heathen expected some mighty and extraordinary work to be

performed by the prophet; and when merely ordered to go and wash seven times in the river Jordan, he was staggered and offended by the very simplicity of the means proposed for his recovery. But he was brought to know that the healing virtue lay *not* in the waters of Jordan, or in any waters, but in the power of the God of Israel, and in obedience to what he prescribed by the mouth of his servant. So, likewise, in removing the idea of *prematurity* in a newly converted man's enjoying Gospel happiness, or indulging the hope of heaven, I quoted the cases of the gaoler at Philippi, and of the Ethiopian eunuch, both of whom *rejoiced* in the experience of Gospel blessings, from *the very moment of their believing the truths that were preached to them*. We find it written that the same thing happened at Samaria on a large scale. Very many people believed in Christ through the preaching of Philip; and we read that "*there was much joy in that city*." And it was manifest that these references to primitive Christianity brought home the conviction to his own mind, that he was himself experiencing nothing more than other men had experienced under similar circumstances.

You, my dear brother, speak of Howell as "a fresh jewel added to the Redeemer's crown;" and, "from what I have written at this time, you will judge that he shines with an increasing brilliancy. Notwithstanding his high talents, and great proficiency in

professional and scientific knowledge, he talks with me in a most childlike manner on the things that concern his peace; indeed, he evinces as humble and teachable a spirit as I have ever met with. This, combined with his extreme desire for information, and his remarkable acuteness and penetration, invests with uncommon interest the intercourse I am privileged to hold with him. His mind is always occupied with something of importance—he never trifles; nor does he now shew any desire for controversy or disputation. His aim is to acquire the knowledge of those truths on which his present peace and everlasting safety are suspended. He wants not only knowledge to satisfy the cravings of his intellect, but, above all, he wants food for his immortal soul. And you can easily suppose how much pleasure there is in dispensing to him the “Bread of Life,”—expounding the truths of “the glorious Gospel of the blessed God,” according to the ability given to me.

I cannot withhold from you some account of a subsequent conversation I have had with Howell, which still farther develops the state of his mind. You may, therefore, expect to hear again from me soon.

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LETTER IV.

To the Rev. J. STEVENSON.

Torquay, Dec. 25, 1843.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

My letter of the 15th and 16th contained a pretty full account of a conversation I had with Mr. Howell some days before. I thought it sufficiently interesting to communicate to you; and on the second day afterwards our conversation was no less interesting. So soon as he had replied to my inquiries respecting his health, he said, "I recollect your once saying something about the power of sin being removed, and that this was one of the blessings which the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour brings to us. I should like to hear something more on this subject."

It instantly occurred to me that this request indicated a peculiar state of mind. The topics which he had started at the previous interview, and the ways in which he expressed himself, led me to think that he

was beginning to look inwards, and that the discovery of much that was sinful in his own heart had made him fearful of entertaining the hope of heaven. The information which he now requested intimated, although he did not say so, that some "root of bitterness" was already springing up within him which he had not expected, and which caused him disappointment, and perhaps some measure of doubt also, as to the sincerity or stability of his faith; at all events, this was the impression made on my own mind, and it influenced the particular turn that was given to our conversation.

I stated, generally, that the salvation which is by the faith of Jesus Christ is of a threefold character: we are delivered from *the guilt* of sin, from *the power* of sin, and from *the punishment* which sin deserves. This opened the way for a discourse on justification and on sanctification,—on the distinction between the one and the other, and on their connection the one with the other. I explained how it was necessary, from the holiness of God's character, and for the honour of his holy law, that the pardon of sin should be accompanied with a declaration of righteousness. In order to our acceptance with God and restoration to his favour, we must stand acquitted of the guilt with which we are charged. A simple pardon would never meet the necessities of our case, and hence the value and the meaning of those numerous

passages which speak of the righteousness of Christ as the ground of our justification in the sight of God. "He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 21. See, also, Rom. iii. 21-26, and Philip. iii. 8, 9). As there is nothing in us to merit the forgiveness which we need, so it is only through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the righteous One, imputed to us, that we appear as righteous before God. This is what is called our justification. It is on the part of God a sovereign act, which, once passed, is neither to be recalled nor repeated; and, on our part, the active and passive obedience of the Saviour,—that is, his life of perfect holiness, and his sacrificial death, are accounted ours when the Holy Spirit works faith in us. "And, therefore, being justified by faith, we *have* peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

I was anxious to fix his mind on the finished and accepted work of the Lord our righteousness, and plainly to point out how that wondrous work was all undertaken and accomplished for us men, and for our salvation; and to urge him to the exercise of a continued faith in the Saviour, and in what he has done for us, as the only method by which the delightful peace he had been enjoying could remain undisturbed. He was profoundly attentive, and never once interrupted me. "I see," he then said, "that in order to be justified, our faith must embrace the

blood of Christ for the pardon of our innumerable offences, and the perfect righteousness of Christ as a substitute for our want of righteousness." "Yes," I answered; "were it not so, we could not be saved at all. And it is from overlooking this grand truth, which you have so well expressed, that many christian people are deprived of the peace and joy which ought to be their possession. They fancy, that whilst they look to the Saviour for pardon, they ought to look to themselves for righteousness." "Ah!" said Howell, "that is important, very important. But is there not provision in the Gospel scheme for a deliverance from the power of sin? God's people, surely, should be holy: they for whom the Son of God died should themselves die unto sin." This observation led me to speak of Gospel holiness. I mentioned the operative nature of faith. Whatever we believe has an effect upon us; and that effect is regulated by what we believe, and by the liveliness of our belief. To this he cordially assented. "Now, then," I continued, "whenever a convinced sinner believes that Jesus Christ died for him on the accursed tree, and that nothing short of the blood of God's incarnate Son could wash away his guilt, and deliver him from the wrath to come, he is at once constrained to hate sin as his greatest enemy, and to love his Saviour as his best friend. Here is provision for his subsequent holiness. He is sanctified

by the belief of the truth as it is in Jesus, and also by the indwelling of the Spirit of Jesus, which is promised to believers." I asked if he had not often noticed, in his intercourse with mankind, that a certain class of people are much freer than others from the follies and immoralities that every where abound. This he acknowledged. "And do you not feel in yourself," I added, "that *now* you have a delight in thinking of God, and a desire to serve him, which you never felt before?" "Blessed be God!" he replied; "blessed be God! I can say that is true." "Well, then, my dear friend, how is it so? Is it not your faith in Christ as your Saviour that fills your heart with the love of God, and holy love prompts you to all holy obedience? But it is as a sinner that you believe in Christ. Were you not a sinner, you would not need a Saviour: and, were he not a complete Saviour, you could not confide in him, nor rejoice in his work." He admitted the justice of all this. "I, therefore, expect you will perceive that justification and sanctification are two distinct things which must not be confounded. The Gospel, which provides for our deliverance from the guilt we have already contracted, provides, also, that from the moment of our believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall follow after holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. But the work of Christ *for us*, and which alone is effectual for our justification, is quite different from the work of Christ *in us*,

by which we are sanctified. The work of Christ, in our nature, and in our stead, is complete; and, therefore, St. Paul says of believers, '*Ye are complete in him.*' In ourselves the principle of faith is seldom strong, and often is not in exercise at all. We do not realise Christ's presence with us and in us; we do not sufficiently feel the intensity of our obligations to his love, and hence the imperfection of our holiness. Our holiness, besides its incompleteness at the best, fluctuates; it ebbs and flows like the tide, although not with the same frequency or regularity. But I mention this merely to warn you against the danger of resting on your own attainments for peace of mind, or for hope towards God. Christ must be your confidence from first to last; and every feeling of remaining sinfulness about you ought to make you cling to him with greater thankfulness, rather than to drive you away from him into the dark and cloudy regions of doubt."

This is the substance of my remarks; and, in conclusion, I earnestly urged upon him the necessity of abandoning all self-righteous dependence, if he really desired either personal holiness or spiritual comfort. "The more steadfastly we rely," I said, "on the Lord Jesus Christ for justifying righteousness, the more successfully shall we resist the enticements of sin and the temptations of Satan; the more constantly we look to the Saviour, and lean on him alone for every

spiritual blessing, the more uniform and satisfying will be our experience of the joys of his salvation."

Whilst I continued speaking, Howell gazed on me with an eager eye, and appeared to be silently scrutinising the import of every sentiment and sentence I uttered. I asked whether what had been said satisfied him that the Gospel scheme of salvation had a direct tendency to subdue the power of sin? With great decision and emphasis he replied, "Your statements are irresistible; they are unanswerable." Of course I was delighted that he expressed his satisfaction so strongly. I then requested him to observe that it was a very common mistake to speak of salvation as *future*,—as something which awaits believers in the eternal world. But he would understand that the faith of Christ puts us in possession of a *present* salvation, although the *fulness* of it will not be enjoyed until the body is redeemed from the grave; yet even now every believer is really a redeemed man, redeemed from the cruel bondage of sin and Satan, and brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. "Ah! yes," he hastily exclaimed; "I see it,—I feel it!" "Then, my friend, let us not close our eyes on the bright and certain prospects of a glory which is yet to be revealed in us,—of a resurrection life when we shall be with Christ, and when we shall be like him. But let us ever with adoring gratitude remember, that by divine grace we are *even now* the

sons of God." He took my hand, and thanked me most affectionately. On prayer being proposed, he desired me to pray "that he might have still more light, and an abiding comfort in his Saviour."

I saw him on the following afternoon: the visit was short. He was labouring under much exhaustion, and I had a headach; neither of us was disposed or fit for a lengthened conversation. But I felt anxious to ascertain how he was affected by the truths which had been so fully submitted to his consideration at the two preceding interviews. He said he was enjoying great peace, although his mind was somewhat confused by opiates. I also thought proper to mention what had been my suspicions in regard to the causes of those states of feeling which had induced him to introduce the particular subjects on which we conversed; and he frankly owned that I was quite correct in supposing that, after the joyful surprise and delight occasioned by the first gush of so much divine light into his previously darkened understanding had somewhat subsided, he had been tempted to harbour the question, whether all this wonderful change that had passed upon him were a delusion or a reality. This was the origin of his doubt whether a person like him was warranted to entertain the hope of heavenly bliss. He confessed farther, that when looking into himself, and examining the state of his heart, he still found many

evil thoughts spontaneously arising which he considered to be inconsistent with the holiness of a true christian; and this made him anxious to know how the power of sin was to be removed. All this was exceedingly natural; and to me it was interesting in a high degree, as confirmatory of much that you have read in my MS. letters on the subject of Doubts. It was truly pleasing to hear Mr. Howell say, his own short experience taught him that his hours of purest happiness were those which had been spent in the contemplation of CHRIST. This reminded me of his own beautiful saying, "*to be with Christ is heaven.*"

On Tuesday last I found him very weak. He spoke in a whisper. In answer to inquiries, he told me that his mind was very composed, and he had had a heavenly night. "My dreams," he said, "were full of religion; my mind was occupied with God, and I had a sweet night. It was heavenly; but," he continued, "the night before it was quite otherwise with me; my dreams were full of sin." As he thus spoke, he became agitated; his countenance assumed an expression of indignant distress and repulsion; he withdrew one of his hands from under the bed-clothes, and moving it rapidly backwards and forwards, as if driving from him some hated object, he added, "My dreams were of things that are utterly abhorrent to my waking desires." Then, calming himself, he said, "I wish you to tell me if I am re-

sponsible for these dreams; if I am to be considered as the perpetrator of such wickedness?" Of course, I had no hesitation in relieving his anxiety on this point. At the same time I could not avoid stating how inveterate is the sinfulness of our nature; and how exceedingly thankful we should be for "the great salvation" which the Gospel reveals; and how thankful he himself especially should be, that now sin, even in a midnight dream, appeared to him so very sinful as to excite his utmost dread and detestation of it. This view of the subject had not occurred to him. It called forth expressions of devout and lively gratitude to the God of all grace; and he requested me to pray "that *this blessed grace* might be continued and increased."

I called at Beulah next morning, and was informed that Mr. Howell was a little revived again. I did not go upstairs to see him.

Thursday, the 21st, was his birth-day. He entered on his thirty-fourth year. I intended giving him a long visit in the afternoon; but in the early part of the day I heard, through a friend, that Dr. Tetley thought him fast sinking. I called about my usual hour; Mrs. Howell was at home—she had got a holiday. In general, she goes to Torre in the afternoon, to teach Mr. Blackmore's children. She accompanied me to the chamber where her dear, dying husband lay. He looked very languid and emaciated: it was

evidently an effort for him to speak, even in a subdued whisper. As we shook hands, I expressed a hope that, in the midst of so much bodily frailty, he had peace of mind. He answered, "Perfect peace;" and, after breathing, he repeated with emphasis, "*perfect peace.*" His motionless posture, and the placidity of his countenance, were to me like two witnesses attesting the truth of his declaration; and truly, under such circumstances, such a testimony was invaluable. He was experiencing in his own soul, and manifesting unto others, the fulfilment of what is written by the prophet Isaiah, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee" (chap. xxvi. 3). I quoted this text, and made some remarks on the connexion between our exercise of trust in God and our enjoyment of inward peace.

Mrs. Howell went out of the room to fetch some refreshment that was being made ready for her enfeebled husband. As soon as we were left alone, he muttered with great composure, "The flesh is fading." This little unlooked-for speech produced a conflict of feelings in my own bosom: it was the plainest, and the first direct intimation he had ever given me that he thought himself dying: and death is always a sad and solemn thing when it is brought near to us. My mourning was, nevertheless, mingled with joy on this occasion, I was really glad to find the dying

man sensible of his situation, and still more so to see that his "perfect peace" was nowise disturbed or diminished by the supposed nearness of "the king of terrors." I looked at him, and listened to him in silence. He presently added, "I feel myself sinking, and I only wish that God may grant me the use of my faculties unto the end, that I may enjoy the consolations of prayer." I said, "God will do what is best. Is your dependence still on Christ?" He shook his head, and he tried to smile as he replied, "Oh, yes, *on him alone.*"

Mrs. Howell returned. It was obvious he had desired to spare her feelings; and, therefore, no allusion was made to her of what had passed during her absence. Howell partook of a little gruel. I begged permission to hold the cup to his head, and was happy of the opportunity to render him that little service, which might probably be the last ever afforded me. I spoke of "the better country," which is our destination, and of the glory that awaits us at the coming of our Lord, when we shall be "clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." I described this hope—this glorious hope, not as a thing uncertain and precarious, but as "sure and steadfast"—a living reality. As such I urged him to hold it fast; for, just as he fixedly believed in the Saviour, he would have "Christ in him, the hope of glory." He distinctly said, "God had promised it"—meaning to ex-

press his own conviction of the firmness of the foundation on which the christian's hopes is based ; and here our conversation abruptly terminated. It was necessary for me to leave the room ; and as he was so weak, and, at the same time, so free from mental disquietude, I judged it wisest not to return.

On Friday, immediately after breakfast, I went to the house, fully prepared to hear that Howell was dead. Inside the garden gate I met the two eldest of his infant children playing ; and this dissipated my doleful forebodings. At the door, the servant told me that her master was rather better ; and, on being ushered into his apartment, I had the unexpected pleasure to observe ~~an~~ appearance of liveliness about his eye, that told how much he had revived from the preceding afternoon.

He was all alone. Mrs. Howell was engaged with her pupils. There lay on his bed a pocket Bible, and a copy of James's " Anxious Inquirer," of which he had just been reading a chapter. He observed, that he had met in it with views of justification and sanctification very similar to those I had already explained to him a few days before. This little volume had been given to him on his leaving Bath, by a pious lady, who was one of his patients. He valued it on her account, and often had it beside him, although he had never yet read the whole of it. In fact, he was able for very little reading, and latterly

he spent what strength he had almost wholly on the Bible. But he felt that he *now* understood this excellent little treatise better than he had done formerly. I could not help remarking, that the time *was* when he himself had been *an inquirer* after salvation, as well as after other branches of knowledge, without his having any *anxiety* on the subject. The time too *was*, and that not long since, when he felt the importance of personal salvation so deeply as to make him a *very anxious inquirer* how he might be saved. But, by the grace of God, and through the teaching of his Holy Spirit, *he had now found HIM*, of whom Moses and the prophets wrote, even JESUS, THE CHRIST. Instead of being merely *an inquirer* after it, he was a *partaker* of salvation; and *his anxiety* had given place to *gratitude and praise*. A holy smile played on his wasted face as he said, "Yes, indeed, but still I have much to learn."

He told me that his peace of mind continued, and he spoke more freely as a dying man than he did the day before. I thought he was quite inclined for conversation, had not the tenderness of his throat prevented him; at all events, he was intent on something that might prove to edification. He put the Bible into my hand, and requested me to expound. I read some verses in the beginning of the first chapter of 1 Peter. The subject is very animating, and peculiarly calculated to support the tried, and to cheer the

dying christian. My own soul had a benefit in dwelling on "the resurrection of our Lord from the dead;" and on the "lively hope" with which his resurrection inspires his believing people, that they too shall rise; and on "the inheritance" which is reserved for them; and on the power of God, by which "they are kept through faith" until they are put in possession of their glorious and complete salvation "in the last time." These truths greatly comforted the dear dying man. We spoke, too, of the mighty power of Gospel faith and hope to bear us up under present, and even under manifold temptations:" and of that unquenchable love to an unseen Saviour, which has carried many delicate females, as well as healthy men, to the gibbet and to the stake; and of that insatiable desire, and holy assurance, of seeing Him whom our souls love, which gives rise to a "joy that is unspeakable and full of glory." In such converse we mutually enjoyed a sweet and solemn season of spiritual refreshment. He asked me to pray, and renewed his request of the former afternoon. He particularly wished, if it pleased God, that his mental faculties might not be impaired, and that he might be able to enjoy the advantages of prayer unto the end. This led to some interesting talk about a variety of other blessings, which it would be our privilege to implore, as peculiarly needed at the time; and it was suggested that we ought also to offer up special thanks-

giving for blessings already so freely conferred on him. With this previous arrangement we approached the throne of grace, and poured out our hearts before the Hearer and Answerer of Prayer. It was, indeed, an affecting service—necessarily embracing the past, the present, and the future ; and comprehending not only the case of dear Howell individually, and our recent intercourse, and our anticipated separation ; but on such an occasion we could not omit the case of his wife and children, so soon to become a widow and fatherless. All this was very trying to the fading flesh ; but when the prayer was concluded with his own audible “ Amen and Amen,” I found the dying man neither bathed in tears, nor manifesting any agitation whatever. His “ perfect peace ” had not forsaken him. He rested firmly and securely on the Rock of Ages. There was no shrinking from an encounter with the last enemy ; there were no regrets at the prospect of leaving the world ; no repinings at the overthrow of all his plans and projects for the attainment of professional distinction ; no murmurings against Providence for cutting him down in the very prime of life, and thus early breaking asunder the conjugal and parental ties, to which his amiable dispositions imparted both strength and tenderness. Neither was there any approach to excitement : his composure was something quite remarkable. I am sure that God was the strength of his heart. I am equally sure

that great was his inward happiness ; but it was chastened and kept under subjection, from a continued fear of prematurity or presumption. And by this time he had been brought to those enlarged views of the Divine character, and to that simple reliance on His word, which enabled him to cast upon God the burden of his cares ; and meekly, and patiently, and contentedly, to resign himself, and all that was dearest to him on earth, to the disposal of Unerring Wisdom and Love.

I have never attended a deathbed where there was so little of gloom ; I have never beheld a nobler exhibition of christian calmness under trouble, and of that heavenly serenity, amidst the lengthening shadows of this life's closing hours, which remind one of the softness and stillness of a summer evening, when the noise and the toils of human labours have ceased —when the very elements of nature appear to be indulging in twilight repose ; and when the anticipations of midnight blackness are brightened with the assurance, that the sun which has set beneath the horizon will rise again in the morning, to cheer man onward in the path of life, and to clothe the earth with a fresh mantle of gladness and of glory.

It was not without reluctance that we parted. Neither of us dare say so ; but both of us evidently had the impression that we should not meet again in this world. Our hands remained locked into each

other's for a considerable length of time. I cannot repeat the words of kindness with which he expressed his sense of obligation for my visits ; nor need I repeat my own expressions of grateful delight, in having been privileged to act as a minister of Christ, in explaining to him the Saviour's character and work, and to spend so many pleasant hours with him in mutual christian fellowship, and in united communion with God. At last we did exchange farewells ; but neither of us was aware of what awaited us. Howell, I doubt not, was in the expectation of a speedy release from his diseased and wasted body, and that his immortal spirit would soon depart from this scene of sin, and suffering, and sorrow, to be for ever with the Lord. And I, although far from being well at the time, certainly did not entertain any apprehension of being laid by. But in the wise providence of God, it has been so ordered that the dying man still lingers on, hanging by a slender thread, whilst I have been confined to the house ever since I saw him on Friday morning. I cannot think of asking his afflicted and much-occupied wife to take the trouble of writing to me, and verbal messages furnish me with no particulars about her husband. I learn only in a general way that he is very ill, and at the same time very composed.

Should I afterwards hear any thing interesting respecting either his life or his death, I shall not fail

to apprise you. In the mean time, this letter has swelled out to an immoderate length. It is concluded and dated on Christmas-day, but in reality it has been written at intervals during the past week. It has been the pleasant occupation of my leisure hours from day to day. Let me hear it reaches you in safety, as also whether you received its predecessor.

* * * * *

Wishing you many returns of the season, with much of the presence and blessing of Him who at this season came in the name of the Lord to save us,

I remain,

Your very affectionate friend

and brother in Christ Jesus,

D. P.

LETTER V.

To the Rev. J. STEVENSON.

Torquay, January 13, 1844.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

Since Christmas-day, the date of my last long letter, a variety of circumstances has hindered me from continuing the narrative of Mr. Howell's dying experience; but from my short notes to your wife, and also to your curate at different times, you have already learned that he is both dead and buried.

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord," and this is his blessedness. The spirit has returned to God who gave it. It has gone to Christ who redeemed it, and now mingles with the glorious company of "the spirits of the just made perfect." Now he knows in reality that to be present with his Lord and Saviour is heaven. On earth he saw, through the measure of light that was imparted to him, that in the incarnate

God all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid ; but he had little time to search into these treasures. What surprising discoveries he would make in entering upon the world of spirits ! and how must he now, with ineffable wonder and delight, contemplate his narrow escape from perdition, and his safe entrance into that abode where Satan cannot follow him, and where he shall never feel the power of sin ! It is indeed a blessedness beyond our utmost conception to be for ever separated from sin, and to be for ever with the Lord. And of this celestial blessedness I feel assured that our dear brother Howell is now a partaker.

As a man he is dead : it is only his spirit that lives and is blessed. But the mortal body which has been committed to the grave in corruption and dishonour, to mingle with its kindred dust, shall also, ere long, participate in the blessedness. It shall be raised in honour, in incorruption, and in immortality : it only waits the “ voice of the archangel and the trump of God,” which are to announce the descent of the Lord himself from heaven with a shout, when “ the dead in Christ shall rise first,” and when all the living saints on earth shall be changed. I often marvel that our thoughts are so seldom and so feebly directed to the subject of the resurrection. Oh ! what a day of joy, of glory, of astonishment, that will be, when the whole church of the first-born, gathered

into one, out of all tribes and kindreds of mankind, and*from all climes and countries on the face of this globe,—adorned with their spiritual bodies, fashioned like unto the glorified body of their Lord,—shall live and reign with him, and enjoy the completeness of the great redemption!

But I must leave you to pursue this train of animating thoughts at your own leisure. You desire to hear something more of Howell, and “trust that such a testimony may be given in the last moments as may redound to the glory of God.” I think it is in my power to gratify your desire, and to put fresh songs of praise into your lips for the abundance of grace vouchsafed to the dying man.

You will recollect that when I left him on the morning of the 22d of December, after a very affecting interview, we took a kind of formal farewell. Each of us had the impression that we should not meet again, and so it has happened, although in a way very opposite to our calculations. I considered Howell was on the very brink of the eternal world, and from his conversation that day he evidently thought so himself; whereas the flickering lamp of life did not expire till the 4th of January. But it never entered into my thoughts that the slight indisposition under which I was then labouring might probably increase. Yet this was what Providence had appointed. I returned home from this visit, and

was not able again to leave the house till the day he died. Dr. Madden had been at Beulah early that morning along with Dr. Battersby. He gave me permission to go out, and said if I wished to see my friend once more I must go immediately. I was too late. I saw only a breathless corpse ; but still it was beautiful,—so beautiful that it might have served any sculptor as a model for a representation of mental peace and corporeal tranquillity.

After the first few days of my confinement, I could not be satisfied with verbal messages. I ventured to intrude on Mrs. Howell with little notes of inquiry and of comfort, and in her replies the uniform assurance was given me that her husband enjoyed “perfect peace.” Whatever were the changes and fluctuations in the symptoms of his disease, or in his sensations of bodily comfort or discomfort, his spiritual experience at this solemn crisis underwent so little variation, that the name of Howell has, in my mind, become associated with these sweet words—“perfect peace.” The association is so pleasing and so warrantable, that should your proposal of giving his religious experience to the public be carried out, I cannot think of any title so appropriate as that of **PERFECT PEACE**, exemplified in the dying days of John Warren Howell.

Mrs. Howell has favoured me with some reminiscences of his last days. She says :—

“ It was his frequent request that I should pray with him, and I often made the effort; but, being ill, and unused to oral prayer, I found much difficulty. He encouraged me with great tenderness, and expressed an almost celestial satisfaction when he found that I had prayed by his side while he slept. His daily request was that I should make earnest petitions for the preservation of his intellect, that he might depart with the voice of prayer in his ear.

“ A new symptom appearing, he said,—

“ ‘ Ah! my love, these are so many steps towards the last bourn.’

“ I replied, ‘ You do not fear ?’

“ ‘ No,’ he answered; ‘ blessed be God, all dread is taken away: I rely wholly on the merits of my Saviour.’

“ Can you say *my Saviour* ?’

“ ‘ Yes; *my Saviour*.’

“ Every new pain he called a gracious token sent to warn him that death, and not restoration, was God’s intention towards him. Sometimes, indeed, our wishes would get the better of our judgment, and we would lay too much stress on any little amendment. ‘ Notwithstanding my present uneasiness,’ he would say, ‘ I am certainly better; many of the most urgent symptoms are giving way.’ Alas! he did not discern God’s gracious mercy in thus gently pre-

paring him for the last hour, but took it for an earnest that his life was to be prolonged.

“When I congratulated him on the opening of the new year, he said, ‘It will be a happy new year if begun in glory.’ On the evening of that day he asked me to come and read the Bible, and talk with him. I read the two first chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He called them ‘noble chapters,’ and said they were a complete refutation of the Unitarian doctrine. I asked him that night if he felt himself accepted? He said, ‘I am afraid to speak so decidedly. I have no doubts, no fears; and, perhaps, my natural temperament interferes to modify both my feelings and expressions. You know, love, that I am reflective, not demonstrative. I am afraid Mr. Pitcairn is not satisfied with me on that point, but you must explain to him my peculiar character.’”

And this remark of the dying man affords me a fitting opportunity to say how pleased I felt with his modest diffidence all along. When the truth of the Gospel scheme first broke in upon his mind, and he was made to know experimentally that Christ crucified is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, unto salvation, joy was the ruling emotion of his heart. Then it was he regretted his inability to sing: and had he not felt and expressed his joy, there would have been no proof either to himself or to

others, of his having believed the glad tidings of salvation. But his joy, even when at its height, was still of a most subdued description. In this his natural temperament was manifested, and very soon the calmer emotion of *peace* entirely supplanted *joy*.

From the moment that he began to reflect on his past manner of life, and to watch the state of his heart, he ceased to be joyful. This loss of joy was the less to be regretted, so long as he kept free from spiritual distress; and there was the greatest cause for satisfaction, when his abiding peace was not marred by any tendency to despond. I did urge him to resist the intrusion of doubts, and to rest on the truth of God's word with a steadfast faith; but on the subject of his personal assurance I never remember to have questioned him. Nor did I think it at all necessary, inasmuch as he was so sweetly enjoying and exemplifying the holy fruits of faith.

Mrs. Howell says, "The last Scriptural subject on which we conversed was that of the Roman centurion, He had forgotten the exact words of the narrative. and he asked me how the centurion's refusal to permit the Saviour to come into his house could be accounted for. While I was speaking of this true believer's faith and humility, Dr. Tetley came in, and my dear husband was much pleased and satisfied that the doctor should give the same explanation as I had

done. I afterwards read to him St. Matthew's account of that instructive and interesting narrative" (See chap. viii. 5-13).

His love for the Holy Scriptures became great: their sublime truths absorbed his attention, to the exclusion of chemistry and botany, which were very favourite subjects of experiment and investigation. But his mind was too active ever to be without a subject. A small Bible latterly was his constant companion on the bed. He could read very little at a time; a very few verses, however, supplied materials for deep and long-continued reflection. I remember his once saying to me that he wished to reserve all his strength for the pure Word of God. The only other book he liked to have beside him was "The Anxious Inquirer," where he found much precious truth in a small space, and much that was particularly suited to his own circumstances. But were his life spared, he said, he would give himself up to the study of the Bible; and as it was only small portions of it he could at present read, he asked me to recommend what might be most profitable to him.

Here it is proper to mention that, on the second Sunday after I began to visit him, a hymn had been sung in Trinity Church, which I thought calculated to speak comfort to his heart; so I put the hymn-book into my pocket, and went to see him after

service. You have a copy of the same collection. The hymn I read is the 175th, beginning,—

“ My God, my Father, blissful name !
Oh, may I call thee mine !
May I, with sweet assurance, claim
A portion so divine ! ”

He was delighted with these sentiments, and this hymn continued to be one of three favourites which his wife was often requested to read, and occasionally to sing, in his hearing. Another is the 248th :—

“ Stricken, smitten, and afflicted,
See him dying on the tree !
'Tis the Christ by man rejected ;
Yes, my soul, 'tis he, 'tis he ! ”

And the last he listened to was the 140th :—

“ Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.”

These hymns having been chosen in preference to many others, give a pleasing indication of the current of Mr. Howell's thoughts, and of the frame of his own mind. Christ, his blood and righteousness, was all his dependence, all his hope, all his salvation ; and in

recognising God's fatherly care and love, he no doubt had respect to his wife and children, as well as to himself. His affections were very tender,—his sensitiveness was extreme, and, therefore, the bare idea of separation from the beloved wife of his bosom, who had never heard an angry word from his lips, nor seen a frown on his face, and from their three helpless babes, must have cost him many a pang. But these overwhelming sorrows he obviously kept as secret as he could; he did not wish to distress others with them. To me he rarely broached the subject, and never in presence of Mrs. Howell. To herself, she tells me, he spoke unreservedly, and with astonishing self-possession. He talked over freely with her the state of his worldly affairs, which are the very reverse of being prosperous; and he gave her a number of directions how she ought to act, so as not to involve herself in unnecessary troubles. He spoke also of his funeral, and ordered it to be conducted in the plainest and least expensive manner. He expressed his confidence that God would provide for the widow and the fatherless. Amidst these most painful and naturally agitating communings with her whom he was about to leave "a widow and desolate," he maintained the utmost composure. His faith upheld him. Even whilst he was undergoing these trials, Mrs. Howell could write to me that her husband continued in "perfect peace." The christian

understands how this should be; the man of the world must wonder.

At an early period of my intercourse with him, arrangements had been made for Howell's receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. A variety of circumstances, which it is unnecessary to detail, hindered the accomplishment of his own earnest desires. But about a week previous to his death, this holy ordinance was administered to him and his wife by their kind friend Mr. Blackmore, and it proved a real refreshment to his soul.

On Wednesday the 3d instant he sunk into stupor; he could scarcely articulate, and was almost insensible. His wife tried to converse with him, but he could not attend to her; she offered to read the Bible, but he was incapable of listening: he complained that he had not been able to think of God. In the course of the evening, Dr. Battersby and Dr. Madden were both with him, and saw that he could not long survive. Dr. Madden asked him how all was within. Howell did not understand him at first; he seemed to imagine that the question was professional, and referred to the state of his body; but when Madden explained that he was inquiring about the state of his mind, he replied in a whisper so faint as only to be heard by the application of the ear to his face, "Oh! there has been a wonderful change!—wonderful—wonderful!" and as if lost in the contem-

plation of what he was experiencing, and of what he was expecting of God's love to him, he went on repeating the word "wonderful" for about the space of a minute. He attempted to say something more. Dr. Madden thinks he caught the word "*peace*;" but he could not be sure, as the voice was so feeble. He never spoke again! Thus, with his latest breath, he testified, in the most solemn and emphatic manner, to the wonderful work which the power of divine grace had wrought upon him. I know of no dying words that could have been more appropriate or more impressive.

He passed the night in great tranquillity: he slept almost without interruption. Early on Thursday morning warm cloths were applied to his limbs; but it would appear he was himself conscious that the coldness of death was creeping over him. Of his own accord he turned round from the side on which he had been lying, and, placing himself flat on his back, he first stretched out his limbs, he then closed his own eyes, and compressed his mouth, and folded his left hand across his breast. The right hand he placed just outside the bed-clothes, as if for a parting shake with those around him; and, in this attitude, the last breath gently escaped from the chest at ten o'clock, without one feature of the face being distorted, or one muscle of his body convulsed.

Dr. Battersby had kindly been in attendance from

an early hour, and remained until Dr. Tetley's arrival, about half-past nine o'clock. His presence at this solemn moment was an unspeakable comfort to Mrs. Howell, and painfully gratifying to himself. He once more prayed with and for his dying friend; and Mrs. Howell writes, "Notwithstanding the dimness of his failing senses, I think sufficient consciousness appeared to render it probable that he recognised the words of life poured out at his bedside by Dr. Tetley, whom he loved as a brother;" and she adds, "I feel assured that all was peace, and hope, and joy with him. It was seen in the expression of his closing eyes, and in that calm and holy 'falling asleep,' which those who witnessed it never can forget. Here is my consolation, nay, my rejoicing. I have given him back to the Lord, blessing and praising His holy name that he gave me such an example, companion, and friend, though only for so short a time."

And now, my dear friend and brother, after perusing this simple and faithful record of the closing scene, surely you will acknowledge that dear Howell, in his last moments, did give forth a testimony which hath redounded, and will yet redound, to the glory of God.

The funeral did not take place till the 11th. The delay, in some measure, arose from an expectation that Mr. Empson of Bath might come to Torquay, and

assist in the last sad service ; and, as he has acted the part of an attached and most devoted friend to Howell for a long period, Mrs. Howell naturally desired his presence ; but I observed from the first that she had set her heart on that particular day, because it was the seventh anniversary of her first meeting with him, to whom she was married about two years afterwards, and whose premature loss she now so justly and deeply mourns.

He died in a place where he was a stranger, and he was attended to the grave by persons whose acquaintance had been made only within the last few weeks or months. But still they were his true friends,—they were loving brothers in the Lord,—and this must have been a sweet solace to the poor widow amidst the desolateness of her situation and her circumstances.

The whole of this interesting case is now before you. I shall be anxious to hear your candid opinion of it. Death-bed repentances, in general, are not very satisfactory. We are naturally suspicious of them : and all the more so, as we see many instances of people making great professions of amendment in the time of sickness, who, with returning health, return to the ways of folly and of sin. But, with regard to Howell, there was such earnestness and ingenuousness about him, that a suspicion of his sincerity never

once crossed my mind. I have since heard that his general character was pre-eminently distinguished by honesty and truthfulness. For myself, I am constrained to say, that during upwards of thirty years of christian observation and experience, I have never met with clearer and more decisive evidences of a work of God's Spirit on any of the sons of men. And Dr. Tetley tells me he has been present at many deaths, peaceful and happy deaths, but any thing resembling the dignified composure with which Howell died he never before had witnessed.

I consider it quite a privilege to have made his acquaintance, and to have enjoyed his society, even in his dying hours. During one month I saw him almost daily. Our lengthened interviews, our interesting conversations, are now past and gone ; but they have left a sweet fragrance behind them,—they can never be forgotten while my memory retains its power. And I trust the recollection of his anxious search after truth,—his diligent and persevering use of means,—his humble and teachable spirit, notwithstanding his great literary and scientific attainments,—and his astonishing progress heavenwards, after he received grace to believe in Christ to the saving of his soul,—may ever stimulate myself to “press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philip. iii. 14), and prompt me to “give thanks unto the Father,

who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; and who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and who hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. i. 12, 13).

The salvation of sinners is God's own work. May we not say, it is his greatest work? It is that in which he will be chiefly glorified throughout the endless ages of eternity. Let us give him glory now, for what he has graciously done in plucking dear Howell "as a brand from the burning." And let us ever glorify him for the measure of grace he has bestowed upon ourselves! It is altogether of his own free and saving grace that our cold hearts have been warmed with the love of God, and with love to each other, and with love to the souls of our perishing fellow-creatures. May God grant a continuance and an increase of grace, that our faith in Christ Jesus may be strengthened, and that our love may abound more and more!

Believe me to remain,

Your affectionate friend and brother
in the bonds of the Gospel,

D. P. ·

SUPPLEMENTARY TESTIMONIES.

THE beloved friends whom the foregoing letters were addressed to, and any hesitating reliance on the accuracy of all my statements respecting Mr. Howell. It would be unreasonable, however, to expect that other persons to whom I am unknown should rest with the same degree of confidence on my solitary testimony; and yet, it is highly desirable to inspire universal confidence: for, if any reader should question the truth of the narrative which is presented to him in these letters, he is placed in a most unfavourable position for receiving that edification which is designed and desired by the publication of this little volume. I feel, therefore, a peculiar satisfaction in being able to bring forward two very competent witnesses, whose declarations cannot fail to remove doubts and suspicions where they may exist, and to establish every one in the conviction that Mr. Howell was the subject of a great and decided work of the Holy

spirit before he died ; and that the “ perfect peace,” which he enjoyed and exemplified in his dying days, was the legitimate result of those views of Scripture truths, and of that steadfast faith in the Saviour of sinners, to which through grace he had attained.

My husband was the most important witness. She was ignorant of my correspondence with Mr. [Name], until she was a widow. As soon as she did know of it, her desire to see the letters was not more strong than it was natural. They were accordingly written for : and after she had perused them she sent me the following note :—

DEAR SIR,

I return your letters,—those precious memorials of my beloved husband !

Surely it was a gracious thing that the Lord should have put into your mind to preserve these memoranda. They are balm to me, and I trust may be conducive to the spiritual instruction and comfort of others.

I recognise the subjects of these conversations which took place, even when I was absent,—almost to the very words ; for it was my dear husband's custom to recapitulate the conversations in the evening, as I sat by his bedside ; and often with a minuteness, energy, and animation, that made me weep for my own inability to follow him.

I must take the liberty of adding, that the simplicity and truthfulness of your narrative are peculiarly satisfactory to me, as being in harmony with the character, and with the love of truth, which distinguished, in so remarkable a manner, the dear saint whom it concerns.

Continue to remember me in your prayers ; and believe me,

With deep feelings of gratitude,

Yours,

AUGUSTA HOWELL.

Beulah, Saturday Evening, Jan. 26, 1844.

The other witness is the physician who was in regular attendance on Mr. Howell.

With Dr. Tetley I am in habits of Christian intimacy, and it was through him that my acquaintance with Howell first commenced. I often longed to meet with him, that we might talk together, and compare notes as to the progress of the good work that was going on in the heart of the dying man. But the Doctor was particularly busy about that time, and often called into the country ; besides, his visits to Howell were always in the morning ; mine were in the afternoon. And thus, from one cause and another, I had seen Dr. Tetley only once, and on that occasion only for a few minutes, from the evening when he called, and requested me to visit his

patient, until after Howell's death. His testimony, then, may be received as distinct from mine, and independent of it. Even now the Doctor has not read one of my letters to Mr. Stevenson ; but, at my request, he has committed to paper his own observations and impressions in regard to Mr. Howell's state of mind. And I do think every impartial reader must admit, that what the Doctor states briefly, and in the general, corresponds exactly with what I have narrated at greater length and with more of detail.

To the Rev. DAVID PITCAIRN.

Torre, January 26, 1844.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In attempting to give you an outline of my intercourse with Mr. Howell, I feel the want of memoranda, which, had they been made at the time, would have afforded many interesting indications of his spiritual progress. I hope, however, I may be enabled to give a faithful transcript of the impression left on my mind, desiring to write in prayerful dependence on His help, who can, even by the feeblest instrumentality, accomplish "the good pleasure of His will."

Mr. Howell consulted me soon after his arrival in Torquay, in the early part of last year ; and from that time till the time of his death we had free and

frequent communication with each other. He evidently possessed talents and acquirements of a superior order ; and I do not remember to have spent an hour with him without advantage. His information on all subjects was profound and accurate, and his facility of communicating it extraordinary.

The subject of religion was soon introduced, and I was delighted to find that he took it up with much interest. He appeared, however, to have studied this all-important and first business of life much in the same way as he had studied the sciences, bringing religion to reason ; and consequently his mind was beset with difficulties, proving that the world by wisdom knows not God. Still there was about him a straightforward sincerity and seriousness which gave promise of the approach of a better state.

After a few weeks he left Torquay, improved in health, and fully expecting to renew his professional occupations. I felt some degree of disappointment, as we had never got beyond a certain point ; and he appeared to guard so cautiously against every attempt to draw the affections of the heart, as well as the powers of the understanding, into exercise, in contemplating " the Gospel of the glory of the blessed God."

In a short time he returned to Torre. His health was much broken, and every hope of resuming the practice of his profession altogether abandoned. He

had a correct estimate of his state and prospects, and sometimes spoke of death as not far distant. There was now a humble spirit, and a growing desire to apprehend the truth as it is in Jesus. He felt that if there was any thing valuable in religion, it was something beyond what he had as yet attained: and, in the spirit of one conscious of ignorance and insufficiency, he now sought *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness, exhibiting the disposition of a little child, without which there is no entrance into the kingdom of heaven. He continued to study religion as he had studied the various sciences, in which he had made such remarkable proficiency; but every effort of the understanding, and every obstacle to the reception of its sacred truths, were now lost in the all-absorbing desire to know what he must do to be saved. He began to feel the importance of prayer, and frequently asked me to join him in seeking mercy. At length his earnest longing for rest in Christ could only be described in the words of our Saviour's command, "*Agonise* to enter into the strait gate." And his deepening humility and growing earnestness gave no uncertain indication that the darkness would soon pass away, and the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings.

At this time he had frequent interviews with Mr. Blackmore, and often mentioned most gratefully his deep obligation to him for the pains he took in

meeting his difficulties, and instructing his ignorance. Soon afterwards he removed to Beulah House, and his loss of strength became daily more apparent. I was sitting by his bedside one evening, endeavouring to set before him the suitableness and sufficiency of the Gospel of Christ; and with the view of encouraging him to cast his burden altogether on the Lord, I mentioned your experience in a time of severe illness; when, unable even to retain a few words of Scripture in the mind for a moment, you were kept in perfect peace, because you felt you were on "*the Rock*." On hearing this, he clasped his emaciated hands, and, lifting up his eyes to heaven, exclaimed, "God grant that this may be my lot!" I went from his room to yours, and asked your prayerful interest and assistance. Like Peter going to Cornelius, you did well that you went without delay; for he was prepared to hear all things that were commanded you of God. The power of the Holy Spirit appeared to attend your message from your first interview. Peace and joy in believing took possession of his soul, and, with only occasional interruptions, continued and increased to the last.

I remember he told me that Mrs. Howell had sent for you one evening in consequence of his being for a time in a state of almost "black despair;" as if the enemy had determined to do his worst, knowing that his time was short. I saw him early the following

morning. The temptation had passed away, and tranquillity was fully restored.

His disease now made rapid progress, and he was conscious that the closing scene could not be far distant, although with a characteristic fluctuation of feeling he occasionally spoke of rallying again. But the peace of God rose superior to every other feeling of nature; and, while he could only refer to himself with distrust and dissatisfaction, he spoke of the Saviour with evident delight, and was ever ready to hear of his character and work. Thus did he "look to Him, and was lightened, and his face was not ashamed."

At length the appointed hour of departure arrived, and it was a scene never to be forgotten. He knew that he was dying, and had deliberately laid himself on his back, and carefully adjusted the bed-clothes. Every feature spoke composure, and every limb repose. Thus did this child of God fall asleep, resting securely on the bosom of everlasting LOVE, without a struggle, a sigh, or a groan. We knelt around his bed, and committed his passing spirit to "the Shepherd of Israel," who had already given such cheering evidence of his saving power and gracious presence. Nothing I ever witnessed has made me more *sensible* of the completeness of the salvation of Christ. The suffering and worn-out body was now at rest; and the calm, contemplative countenance and attitude of repose reminded me of Dr. Watts' beautiful lines:—

“By strict experience I have known
Thy sovereign power to save ;
At thy command I venture down
Securely to the grave.”

“Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Nothing could be plainer than that in this case death was a conquered enemy. But who conquered him? Certainly not that wreck of his former self who lay before us. Mind and memory had fled; and had there been no “stronger man” there, the departing spirit would have been an easy prey to the adversary, who had already given an earnest of what he would do, if permitted to take his own unrestrained course. But HE was there of whom it was written, “Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also, himself, likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who, through the fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Thus was the enemy of souls defeated with his own weapon—death; and the happy spirit entered into the presence of that friend, who, when on earth, was so wont to say, “It is I; be not afraid.”

Ever, my dear friend,

Yours affectionately,

JAMES TETLEY.

P.S. I find I have omitted to mention two circumstances forming important features in Mr. Howell's history. I never heard any thing approaching to a murmur, from first to last. And I observed, after his return to Torre, a growing love for the study of the Scriptures. I ought also to have said that he expressed the deepest obligations to you for the kind interest you had taken in his spiritual welfare, and spoke of a MS. you had lent him, as affording much relief and comfort to his agitated mind.

CONCLUSION.

THE word of God declares, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). Sooner or later this is the doom of every man; and surely it is unwise in any one to neglect preparation for that solemn event, from which he cannot escape, and the nearness or remoteness of which he can neither calculate nor control.

To a large class of persons, who find their pleasure exclusively in the business or in the amusements of this world, the subject of death is always unwelcome, and they adopt all expedients to banish it, not only from their conversation, but from their thoughts. This is a common and fearful specimen of that infatuation and insensibility which sin engenders. To those inconsiderate individuals who thus shrink even from the contemplation of death, and who, nevertheless, know that some day or other die they must, there is the truest kindness in submitting a question, which Hannah More has clothed in very forcible language,

"If you cannot face the image, how will you encounter the reality?" We could wish an answer to this question. *The image* of death *may* be shunned and avoided; but death is *a reality*, and it *must* be met. How? and what is to follow? Reader, pause, and consider.

Mr. Howell had tried every way. For years he lived as entirely engrossed with the concerns of this present world as if he were never to die. He was of a peculiarly reflective habit: he thought much, and his thoughts ranged over a vast variety of objects; but he thought not about death, nor of that eternal world into which death is the door of entrance; although what he was daily witnessing, as a medical practitioner, was well fitted to force this grave and important subject on his attention. In this respect he was unwise, notwithstanding his high character for what passes among men under the name of wisdom. But the loss of health reminded him of his folly, and the progress of disease warned him of the approach of death. In these circumstances he acted like a wise man. Finding that he could not face the image of this terrible enemy without having all his fears awakened, he felt it was full time to consider in what way he should be able, without fear, to encounter the reality. He ceased to shut his eyes on the danger of his situation, and now he applied himself with all diligence to seek for the removal

of sin which gives to death its condemning sting. He sought relief in the Gospel of the grace of God ; and in the faith of Him "who hath abolished death," the terrors of conscious guilt were subdued ;—in the faith of Him who is "the resurrection and the life," his hopes of immortality became bright. Thus, as his appointed time drew near, he could think of death without dismay,—he could talk of death with calm delight ; and at last, in the hour of dissolution, he neither shrunk from the contest nor dreaded the consequences ; but, with the most astonishing moral courage, he arranged the very posture of his own body ; and when the spirit fled, the lifeless countenance still retained the expression of that heavenly peace and placidity which death itself had not disturbed. Who can read of his unruffled composure, and of his perfect peace, without the secret prayer, or the expressed desire, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his ?"

Ignorant as we are of the plans and purposes of God, it appears to us a dark and unaccountable dispensation that a man like Mr. Howell should be taken out of the world just at the time when he had become most fitted for usefulness amongst his fellow-creatures, and when he had been prepared and disposed for dedicating all his talents, and all his attainments, to the advancement of the glory of God. We

have, indeed, many philosophers and men of science ; but we have few *christian* philosophers : we have few examples of eminence in human knowledge combined with devotedness to the service of God. We have not many men of distinguished ability and learning, who consider “ the knowledge of the glory of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ,” as the summit of all knowledge. We have not many, excepting among professed theologians, who examine the word of God with that minute and intense application which they give to the works of God, and who study the character of GOD THE SAVIOUR with a deeper and holier interest than that wherewith they contemplate the wonderful attributes of THE GREAT CREATOR.

After his mind had been enlightened in the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ our Lord, Mr. Howell himself remarked, that “ he felt as if he were only beginning to live.” This was a memorable saying ; and its meaning is definite and intelligible. He felt that his past life had been mispent—he felt, that now he was in possession of new principles of action ; and that, in prosecuting even the same pursuits as formerly, he would be influenced by new motives. And had he been permitted to resume his elaborate researches into the numerous departments of natural science, and to transfuse into all of them the true spirit of christianity, he might have shone

before men as a christian philosopher with a bright and attracting lustre, and, according to our judgment, been the honoured instrument of leading many up "from nature, and from nature's God," to the still more sublime, and precious, and satisfying knowledge of redemption, and of the great Redeemer.

But it sometimes happens in the spiritual, as it does in the natural world, that the commencement and the close of earthly existence are almost simultaneous. In the inscrutable arrangements of Providence, it is not unfrequently the case that children are born only to die. Their connexion with this material world has just been recognised, when it is again dissolved. They have scarcely breathed the breath of life, and opened their eyes on visible objects, when death terminates their brief sojourn in the land of living men, and hurries them into the world of spirits. It need not, therefore, be a matter of surprise, that, among those who are born again—who are born of the Spirit, and become new creatures in Christ Jesus, some should be taken away in the very infancy of their spiritual existence. No doubt it is true that most of those who experience the new birth are spared to pass onwards, from being at first mere babes in Christ, to reach the vigour of youth, or the prime of manhood, or the maturity of old age; and, were it not so, the Church of Christ on earth would become extinct, just as the human race would soon

disappear were all children to die in infancy. But it is possible that the number of those who are removed from earth to heaven in the earlier stages of their new and better being is far larger than generally supposed or allowed. Nothing like encouragement must be held out to postpone the great concerns of salvation till a time of sickness and danger; nor dare we flatter any with the assurance of a death-bed repentance. Still it is a blessed truth that the mercy of God is rich towards all who call on him with sincerity and earnestness, even at the eleventh hour. And it is pleasing to hope, that, in the exercise of sovereign grace, not a few who have wasted life and health in the neglect of the Saviour are, in their dying hours, constrained to seek, and privileged to find, a refuge from the wrath to come in his meritorious righteousness and all-atoning blood.

Let it be admitted, however, that the number is not great, we may affirm with certainty that there are, at least, some who have barely begun to "live by the faith of the Son of God," and to behold with enlightened eyes the wondrous truths which his Gospel unfolds, when death mars our anticipations of delightful intercourse and fellowship with them as christian friends and brethren. But when we are called to mourn for their departure from the church below, we ought to rejoice, on account of their speedy admission to the church above. Let such be our

feelings in regard to Mr. Howell. We are not forbidden to mourn over his removal from a world where we think his sanctified talents and activities promised fair to have been a blessing to other professional and literary men; but we bow submissive to the will and to the wisdom of God, who is never at a loss for instruments to accomplish his own designs, and we may rest assured, that had the services of Mr. Howell been needed here, they would have been secured. God has called him hence, and for his own sake we ought to rejoice and give thanks. If his christian pilgrimage was of short duration, it was distinctly marked by divine guidance, and by divine support. If the bud began at length to open which had been slowly forming during the several previous months, its rapid expansion into a flower of the loveliest hues and fragrance explicitly bespoke its heavenly culture. In his case there was no dubiety. We could not err in estimating the origin and character of that change which his whole inner man underwent. It was none other than the Spirit of the living and the holy God who raised him up from the death of trespasses and sins unto newness of life. No other agency could have effected such deep conviction of guilt; such comprehensive knowledge of salvation; such humble, holy and loving reliance on the Saviour of sinners; such patience, and resignation, and fortitude under bodily distress; and such mellowed

ripeness for "the inheritance of the saints in light." On his account it would be wrong not to rejoice. Even the angels in heaven rejoice over every sinner who is brought to repentance, because his deliverance from sin and from Satan adds a fresh jewel to the Redeemer's crown, and opens up a new and everlasting source of glory to the God of all grace. Surely, then, we, who are men upon earth, ought with still greater alacrity and ardour to swell the anthem of praise to redeeming love, and to rejoice over this our brother, who was lost and is found, who was dead and is alive; and who, though so soon removed from us, after having "passed from death unto life," has only left the imperfections of earth to enter into the joys of heaven.

Blessed be God! cases of conversion are not rare things. Under the preaching of the Gospel, they are continually occurring in our own country and in other lands, among all ranks and conditions of people,—chiefly, however, among the poorer classes,—comparatively seldom among the rich and the noble. And, beyond the circle of his own immediate friends and acquaintances, no notice would have been taken of the case of Mr. Howell, had there not appeared something unusual both in his own character and in the gracious dealings of God with him.

It must have struck every reader of this little

volume, that before Mr. Howell arrived at that state of peace, in the enjoyment of which his earthly existence so gloriously terminated, he had previously undergone a diligent, and anxious, and even distressful inquiry after rest for his soul. From the beginning of August, when he left Bath, up to the latter end of November, a period of nearly four months, the principal occupation of his acute, and thoughtful, and logical mind, was to discover in the religion of Christ that solid foundation of truth on which, as a sinful and immortal creature, he might build a sure and certain hope of pardon and of life everlasting. Nothing short of CERTAINTY on a point of such momentous importance could satisfy a mind like his. And as he laboured hard, and waited long ere he attained the object of his fervent desire, it may prove useful to others to examine the causes in which his mental anxieties originated, and the purposes of God in permitting their lengthened continuance.

In the first place, then, it may be observed, that from the time the physicians pronounced a hopeless opinion of Mr. Howell's disease, the idea of dying, and of entering into an untried and never-ending state of existence, produced in him great agitation and alarm.

So long as health permitted the undisturbed ardour of his professional and literary pursuits, he found

therein a never-failing source of present satisfaction ; so long as he gave no thought to the requirements of that holy and immutable law of God against which he was a daily offender, he had no influential apprehension of any impending punishment ; and so long as he undervalued and neglected the free grace of God, proclaimed in the Gospel of his Son, from ignorance of his own guilty and helpless condition, he did not smart under the lashings of an upbraiding conscience. Like multitudes around him, he was conversant only with men, and with the material world. Practically considered, his condition resembled that of the heathen Ephesians, previous to their reception of Christianity, of which St. Paul writes, " At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world " (Eph. ii. 12). But this actual and deplorable destitution of spiritual blessings was not felt, and therefore caused no distress. The calmness and serenity of mind which he generally enjoyed was not at all of a religious character. His peace and self-satisfaction arose entirely from spiritual indifference ; and from sinful inattention to the just claims of God on the affections and services of his rational creatures ; and from utter forgetfulness of the great day of reckoning, which cannot be evaded. Out of this false security he was roused by the announce-

ment that disease had attacked the vital organs of his body. He knew that a death-blow was given to all his fondly cherished schemes and projects for scientific discoveries and professional distinction. A sense of danger withdrew his thoughts from an exclusive attention to "the things that are seen, and temporal;" and he could not contemplate "the things that are unseen, and eternal," without terror and dismay.

The state of great alarm into which Mr. Howell was thrown by the near prospect of death was the precursor of a state of pure peace and of great blessedness. It was the method which God, in the exercise of his sovereign grace, was pleased to employ with this gifted individual, to break the fascinating spell with which the study of animated and inanimated nature had monopolised his intellectual powers; and to awaken him to a feeling of personal concern with that spiritual world of wonders revealed to us in the great salvation which is by Jesus Christ our Lord. But the peculiar structure of his mind tended for a time to aggravate his alarm: and this is the more deserving of notice, because many persons of weaker intellect, and of inferior moral character, when informed of their dying circumstances, betray comparatively little fear of death; or, at all events, they succeed in quieting their fears by one expedient or another.

One reason for Mr. Howell's extreme uneasiness under deadly disease we shall find in that resolute uprightness, that high conscientiousness, that unswerving love of truth, which were governing principles in all his conduct. In ordinary cases, such high moral qualities act as a quietus to the natural conscience; and might have done so with him also had not the Holy Spirit made use of them as instruments for the destruction of all false peace. His love of truth had a certain measure of divine illumination to guide it. Thus he did not attempt to deceive himself as to his real situation; nor did he wish to be deceived by others. He was dying, and he was not prepared to die. This was his honest conviction. Notwithstanding the amiability of his dispositions, and his strict regard to morality, HE NEVER SOUGHT A REFUGE IN SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS. This is a remarkable fact, and goes far to explain the peculiar character of his early convictions, and of his subsequent peace and composure. Long before he had any spiritual discernment of the holiness of God's law, and of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, he never attempted to deny or to extenuate his manifold short-comings. He laid no claims to a piety which he did not possess; he was in nowise tinctured with formalism; he attached no worth to the outward observance of religious duties in which the heart was not engaged; he knew how far removed he was

from moral perfection. He was well aware that he had neither feared, nor loved, nor obeyed God as he ought to have done; and, with all these convictions and impressions, his conscientiousness, which had formerly administered peace and comfort to his mind in his intercourse with mankind, became a humbling reprover to him, and a ceaseless tormentor, when he found that he had to deal with his Maker.

There was safety amidst this distress to which Mr. Howell was subjected. Had his mind been differently constituted, unless proportionately ample supplies of grace had been vouchsafed, he might have been tempted to indulge a delusive satisfaction with the inoffensiveness of his studies and avocations, or with the conscious integrity of his conduct, or with the estimation in which he was held by his friends and associates. In this snare multitudes are caught who gladly suffer themselves to be deluded, and who thus descend to the grave with a lie in their right hand. Most men are prone to overvalue their own paltry and imperfect performances, and to overlook the strict demands of the divine law. But it was otherwise with Mr. Howell. He saw nothing in himself resembling that holiness which God requires of all who would approach unto him, neither could he rest contented with those vague expectations of *divine mercy and forbearance*, which quiet the fears of many dying sinners. He did think of God; but he

thought candidly of his *justice* as well as of his mercy; of his *faithfulness* as well as of his forbearance: and such thoughts troubled him, because he felt that he could not stand the scrutiny of a just and faithful God. He was also necessitated to think of death, judgment, and eternity; and in the consideration of these subjects he was overwhelmed. Hence it is obvious that the honesty and candour which he brought to the examination of his own state and prospects operated very powerfully in causing and increasing his mental distress. But the anguish and alarm under which he suffered were amply compensated by his freedom from a self-righteous spirit, which, in general, is the greatest obstacle to the reception of a gratuitous salvation; and by his possession of that humility and self-abasement, which dispose a man to look for relief out of himself.

Some persons may imagine, that Mr. Howell's high intellectual faculties might have raised him out of the uneasiness and fears to which the delicacy of his moral sense subjected him. This, however, is quite a mistake. On the contrary, the peculiar character of his mind explains the reason why he could not shake off his agitating apprehensions. We have seen that he was distinguished by an excessive inquisitiveness, by profound reflection, by unwavering truthfulness, by energetic perseverance, and by great logical

acumen. These mental properties, in their united activity, had often secured his success in the investigation of scientific subjects. But, so far from facilitating his attainment of that good hope for another world, which, as a dying man, was indispensable to his peace, they were the very cause of a continual succession of difficulties and hindrances; for, the more he inquired into the moral character of God, and the deeper he reflected on the principles of rectitude, which must regulate his moral government of his creatures, the distance between God and himself seemed to increase. The more he pondered over his own diseased and dying condition, proofs of his sinfulness multiplied upon him; and the more he impartially considered the justice of God's threatened punishment of sin, the difficulty of being saved appeared the greater. The more he tried to grasp the immensity of an eternal existence, and the more intensely he felt the paramount importance of personal salvation, the insignificance and insufficiency of all human means of deliverance became painfully manifest to him.

But his attention had been directed, even before his illness, to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,—that only true foundation of a sinner's hope towards God,—the only fountain that sends forth a pure and enduring blessing to the distressed. And it is true that, after his arrival at Torre, his mind was often

soothed when hearing of the love of God to his guilty creatures, in sending his well-beloved Son as their Saviour. Yes; it did soothe him to hear of an atonement for human transgressions, whereby the justice of God is satisfied; and of a perfect righteousness wrought out in their behalf, wherein even the chief of sinners may find acceptance with God. These wondrous truths excited his interest and his gratitude; but still they failed to yield him the satisfaction he required, because, however vigorously he applied his understanding to their comprehension, they produced no moral influence upon his affections. His heart, as he afterwards confessed, remained untouched. His natural incredulity and demand for proof was a barrier in the way of his realising the love of God so marvellously exhibited. He did not feel himself to be the object of this love. He could not appropriate the atoning sacrifice and meritorious righteousness of Christ as the ground of his own justification. He could not believe in Christ as a Saviour to himself. Thus, at that initiatory period of his spiritual history, because of his inability to believe it, that Gospel which is the power of God, and the wisdom of God unto salvation, was nothing better in his experience than a pleasing but profitless speculation. His heart was not yet opened to receive it. It did not pacify his conscience—it gave him no assurance of being forgiven—it did not secure him of

admission into a world of happiness and life, when he should leave this world of sin and death. He saw that other people with whom he had intercourse did believe this Gospel, and that they had "joy and peace in believing." But this rather augmented than diminished the uneasiness with which he was oppressed; and thus the fruitless efforts of his own extraordinary intellect were well calculated to teach himself a most instructive lesson, which, it is to be hoped, may not be lost on others. For whether he fixed his attention on the want of righteousness in himself, or on the all-perfect righteousness which is in Christ Jesus, as the sinner's surety, instead of obtaining the satisfaction which he so eagerly and so honestly desired, he suffered a greater degree of mental disquietude than is usual with other inquirers, whose conscientiousness is less active, or who think less profoundly, or whose reason yields more easily to argument.

We know there are people in the world whose mental obtuseness is so decided, or whose moral sensibility is so deficient, that the prospect of death neither intimidates nor appals them. Certainly Mr. Howell did not belong to that pitiable class of human beings. But, although it has been shewn that the peculiar construction of his noble mind increased, and could not remove the alarm into which the know-

ledge of his dangerous situation had thrown him, yet we ought to believe it was the grace of God that awakened him to that sense of his sinfulness which made the thought of death so terrible. Thus his alarm, however trying and painful, was the commencement of blessing to his soul; and, no doubt, had it pleased God to bestow it, a larger measure of grace at first would not only have convinced him of his sins, and of the danger to which they exposed him, but speedily conducted him to that knowledge, and faith, and love of the Saviour, which is the peaceful haven of safety for tempest-tossed and afflicted sinners. That haven he was destined to reach; and there, at length, when he had escaped from the inward storm, he did enjoy "a great calm." But the purposes of God, in reference to this talented and interesting man, while they were fraught with the richest mercies for time and for eternity, were slowly developed, as if with the avowed design of setting forth in a conspicuous way the foolishness of human wisdom, and the impotency of even the highest intellectual powers, to silence the condemning voice of a guilty conscience, or to irradiate the gloom of death with the gladdening hope of a new, and a better, and an endless life.

It was good for Mr. Howell himself to learn how little his own unaided abilities and accomplishments could forward or secure his everlasting salvation.

It was necessary for him to know experimentally that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). This humbling lesson prepared the way for another still more humbling to the proud heart of an unrenewed man. But let us mark how wise it was in God to teach him, in the manner best suited to his natural genius, and to his studious habits, those doctrines of salvation by free and unmerited grace, which are the very glory of the Gospel dispensation. He was left for a time—for a long time, to exercise his inquisitiveness, his reflectiveness, his patient reasoning, his persevering research, on the all-important topic of how a sinner is to be pardoned and reconciled unto God consistently with his holiness and justice, and how he himself might be delivered from the bondage of the fear of death. During all this time of inquiry he was diligently using the proper means of grace. But his prayers were not answered as he expected; and his Scripture readings and religious conversations did not bring him the relief he needed. Still, though he might be unconscious of it, a great work was going on. He was growing in humility, in teachableness, in earnestness, and in dependence upon God. This was the training to which he was so wisely subjected, and now the abundance of grace was vouchsafed

unto him. He no longer had to complain that his heart remained untouched. The fire of divine love had touched it; and its blindness was enlightened, its obduracy was softened, its enmity was subdued. The pride of intellect was cast at the foot of the cross of Christ. The teaching of the Holy Spirit brought him at once to understand, and appreciate, and believe those doctrines of the cross which gave to his mind that rest, and satisfaction, and comfort, for which, in the strength of his own intellectual faculties, he had laboured so long in vain. "The truth as it is in Jesus" commended itself to his judgment, and to his conscience. He received it without hesitation, and with all thankfulness; and, as has been well illustrated in the INTRODUCTION, it was just as natural, after he experienced spiritual illumination, that he should have entered so readily and so fully into the enjoyment of "perfect peace," as it was that, without it, he should have continued in a state of spiritual darkness and distress. Such was the constitution, or temperament, of his mind, that he had no rest until the Spirit of God discovered to him **THE TRUTH** he was in pursuit of to rest upon. But, having once found the truth, he held it fast, and in its possession he enjoyed the fulness of its blessings.

THE LETTERS addressed to Mr. Stevenson contain the record only of what may be termed the christian

experience of Mr. Howell. They exhibit the commencement, the progress, and the close of his bright career as a christian man; and it was inconsistent with the plan of **THE BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH** which is prefixed to the Letters to do more than briefly state the fact, that he continued for some months, after his return to Devonshire, to suffer more or less of mental agitation or anxiety. It appeared, therefore, to be essential to a correct understanding of his case, that, in winding up the narrative, there should be presented to the consideration of the reader some specific details of that intellectual and spiritual discipline which he underwent, before he was enabled calmly to repose on the bosom of God's forgiving love, and to descend into the corruption of the grave "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

And now it is most fervently to be desired that every reader, and especially every man of like mind and similar pursuits, may profit by the lessons which the experience of Mr. Howell so plainly enforces.

1. How utterly **IMPOTENT** in the matter of salvation are the noblest intellectual powers, the most extensive attainments in secular or scientific pursuits, the most blameless moral behaviour, or the highest place in the estimation of friends and acquaintances! These are valuable possessions in respect of "the life that now is:" and, so far as they can enrich, Mr.

Howell was rich indeed. But in reference to "the life which is to come,"—that awful hereafter, to the brink of which disease had brought him, he found them to be entirely worthless; and so will every one who, with equal honesty and earnestness, thinks of God, and of death, and of eternity. It is, indeed, a hard and humiliating lesson; but it is needful to all men, whether rich or poor, whether learned or unlearned; for there is no safety, no peace, no hope for any awakened sinner, until he feels and confesses that, in regard to his deliverance from guilt and its consequences, "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Rom. ix. 16).

2. And how OMNIPOTENT is that grace of God which brings to us salvation! So soon as it pleased God to work effectually by his Spirit on the understanding, and on the will, and on the affections of Mr. Howell, a great and happy change took place. Every barrier was broken down; every obstacle was removed; every difficulty vanished. The way of a sinner's return to God stood wide open before him. He saw that Christ himself was the way; he felt that the Holy Spirit was his guide; and now he was no longer faithless, but believing. Here is another humbling lesson to man,—he must submit to receive salvation wholly as a free gift. But, oh! how thankful should a sinner be to be saved on any terms! how thankful

should a sinner be that salvation is the work of God ! Nothing short of that Almighty power, which at first created man in the image of his Maker, can renew what sin has defaced. Nothing less powerful than that omnipotent Word which called the material universe into being can transform the fallen sons of Adam into " new creatures in Christ Jesus." Hence we read that " the Gospel of Christ " is " **THE POWER OF GOD** unto salvation, unto every one that believeth " (Rom. i. 16). Again, " the preaching of the Cross " is " **THE POWER OF GOD** " (1 Cor. i. 18). And in exact harmony with these doctrinal statements St. Paul prays for the Ephesians, that they might know " what is **THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF HIS POWER** to us-ward who believe, according to the working of **HIS MIGHTY POWER**, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead," &c. (Eph. i. 18-22.) Truly this is a very remarkable and most emphatic passage of Scripture. It sets before us this wondrous truth, that every sinner who believes in Christ for salvation has been made to experience, not merely " *the power* of God," nor yet " *the greatness* of his power," but " *the exceeding greatness* of his power ;" and, oh ! how important it is to " know," that until we do experience the omnipotence of divine grace, we never shall believe in the Saviour whom God hath sent to bless us.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the grand

remedial scheme for man's moral and spiritual maladies, is, "the power of God." How encouraging is this! the belief of it will inspire a feeling of security. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. viii. 31.) But let it be remembered that the same omnipotence which has *provided* the remedy must also *apply* it. The grace of God, which brings salvation *to us*, must likewise work faith *in us*. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8, 9). And then "the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, AND THE LORD ALONE SHALL BE EXALTED" (Isaiah, ii. 17).

APPENDIX.

ON THE HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST.

See page 58.

THE incarnation of the Son of God is a subject as important as it is wonderful. It is a subject, also, of great magnitude in a theological point of view; but the one point claiming further elucidation at present is, not that the Son of God became man, which might have been accomplished by a direct act of CREATION, as in the case of Adam; but that, by means of GENERATION, he connected himself with humanity as it exists since the fall, whilst he himself "knew no sin," and "did no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 22). It is to this that St. Paul refers when he says, "And, without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness" (1 Tim. iii. 16). The greatness of the mystery lies not so much in the *manifestation* of God, in visible form as a man, as in his being "*manifested in the flesh.*" This expression, "the flesh," is of very frequent occurrence in Scripture, and has many various significations; but when applied to human beings, it always denotes a state of physical or moral existence affected by sin. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." But here is the mystery—God sent

forth his Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh," subject to all the infirmities and distresses that are incident to the sinful nature of man, subject even to death itself, and still throughout his whole earthly existence he continued to be "the Holy One and the Just." He took the nature that had sinned, but he himself was altogether "without sin." These two things, apparently incompatible, the connexion of God's incarnate Son with us sinners, and his own spotless holiness, were absolutely necessary, the one to insure his sympathy with us, and the other to insure our salvation by him. May we not here exclaim, in the language employed by the apostle on another occasion, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

The doctrine of our Lord's true humanity is distinctly acknowledged in the Articles and Confessions of all the Protestant churches. The statements of the Athanasian Creed are specially explicit on his manhood as well as his godhead. But our proofs must primarily be taken from Scripture.

The very first intimation of a Saviour is remarkable. After the disobedience of Adam and Eve, their hope of pardon and deliverance from the tempter was directed to "THE SEED of the woman" (Gen. iii. 15). The Great Deliverer was subsequently promised as "The SEED of Abraham" (Gen. xxii. 18): "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." And of this promise St. Paul has given us an inspired interpretation: "Now to Abraham and to his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds,

as of many ; but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Christ" (Gal. iii. 16). In the opening of his Epistle to the Romans, the apostle speaks of himself as "separated unto the Gospel of God,"—"concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of *THE SEED of David according to the flesh*" (Rom. i. 5). So it had been predicted by Isaiah : "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots (xi. 1). And also by Micah : "And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel," &c. (v. 2-4). With these predictions the Jewish people were familiar ; and hence, when there was a division among them concerning our Lord, some said, "Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was ?" (John, vii. 42.) The reader will do well to peruse the discourse of St. Peter on the day of Pentecost, where particular reference is made to our Lord's connexion with David (Acts, ii. 25-36). In complete harmony with Old Testament prophecies, the commencement of the New Testament Scriptures is called, *The book of THE GENERATION of Jesus Christ the Son of David the Son of Abraham*" (Matt. i. 1). And, in the same chapter, we read that the angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, "Thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife ; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And *she shall bring forth a Son, and*

thou shalt call his name JESUS," &c. This, too, is in fulfilment of prophecy: "Hear ye now, *O house of David*; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary God also? Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Is. vii. 13, 14). "*For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son* is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, *upon the throne of David*, and upon his kingdom," &c. (Is. ix. 6, 7.) Thus we read, in St. Luke's Gospel, that the angel Gabriel was sent from God, "to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, *of the House of David*; and the virgin's name was Mary." And the angel said unto her, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him *the throne of his FATHER David*," &c. (l. 26-32.) Again, in the second chapter, it is recorded that Joseph went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, *unto the City of David*, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David), &c. There Mary "brought forth her first-born Son;" and there the angel of the Lord announced the wondrous event to the shepherds of Bethlehem, "Behold, I bring

you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, *in the City of David*, A SAVIOUR, WHICH IS CHRIST THE LORD." All these quotations from the prophets, and evangelists, and apostles, when grouped together, and arranged in juxtaposition, present an interesting mass of evidence. And their united testimony most incontrovertibly establishes the fact, that our Almighty Saviour was "OF THE SEED OF DAVID ACCORDING TO THE FLESH,"—that he was a true man, and a man truly connected with the existing race of mankind:—"the seed of the woman," through the line of Abraham, and of David.

It is likewise deserving of very particular notice, that, during the brief period of his intercourse with men on earth, our Lord so very frequently speaks of himself as "THE SON OF MAN," and of men as HIS BRETHREN. By such modes of expression he evinced his anxiety to strengthen our belief in his true humanity, and in his connexion with ourselves.

The apostles have been led by the Holy Spirit to the use of a similar style of language, and, no doubt, for the same object.

St. John, in the commencement of his Gospel history, first mentions the second person in the adorable TRINITY as THE WORD, who was with God in the beginning, and who was God; and then, after this unequivocal assertion of his essential divinity, we find it written, "AND THE WORD *was made flesh*, and dwelt among us" (John, i. 14).

St. Peter, in his memorable discourse on the day

of Pentecost, to which allusion has already been made, has these words,—“*Jesus of Nazareth, A MAN* approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders,” &c.; “ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;” “*this Jesus* hath God raised up;” “therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made *that same Jesus*, whom ye have crucified, both **LORD AND CHRIST**” (Acts, ii. 22–36).

St. Paul, in the synagogue at Antioch, goes over much of the same ground, in regard to the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth; and then draws this practical conclusion, “Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through **THIS MAN** is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins,” &c. (Acts, xiii. 38). And at Athens he finished his powerful address with these words,—“Because he (God) hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by **THAT MAN** whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts, xvii. 31).

The only other passage to which it seems necessary to refer is in the First Epistle to Timothy,—“For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, **THE MAN CHRIST JESUS**; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (ii. 5, 6).

In the immediately preceding verses the apostle had spoken of our Saviour as God, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. Here he speaks of the sinner’s way of

approach to God, and of that inestimable "ransom" through which alone there is salvation for any. And, therefore, as an encouragement to our confidence in Him, the living Mediator who interposes between a holy God and his guilty creatures, is designated "**THE MAN CHRIST JESUS**;" because it was his humanity that enabled him, *as our substitute*, to give himself, to shed his own most precious blood as the ransom-price of our deliverance. Thus how real and how great is our encouragement to cling to the God-man Mediator, with loving and thankful hearts! "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, *but he took on him the seed of Abraham*;" and, forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, *he also himself likewise took part of the same*" (Heb. ii. 14-16).

"The Man" who is the Mediator, is substantially allied by a common humanity to "the men" for whom he mediates. But the difference between him and us lies, not only in his being "without sin," but especially in this, that **HE IS MORE THAN MAN**. In his one person the divine nature is mysteriously but indissolubly united with the human. He who was born of the Virgin Mary is at the same time "the Son of the Highest." Such a Mediator is precisely what we need, and what we want; for something within tells us that he who is to effect a reconciliation between God and man must be **MAN'S BROTHER**, as well as **GOD'S FELLOW**;—that He who is to act the part of our Redeemer must be our kinsman. None else can legally and effectually interfere to raise us from the low estate into which we have fallen; none else can

procure our discharge from the debts we have incurred by transgression against God ; none else has right or authority to put us in possession of our forfeited inheritance : and hence the vast importance of distinctly understanding the peculiar constitution of the Saviour's PERSON, in order to a firm reliance on his WORK. Unless we believe that, in his one person he was, and is, and ever shall be, both God and man, we cannot consistently and confidently trust in him, either as our SURETY or as our SAVIOUR. To effect our salvation it was needful that he should act in each of these capacities ; but, were he not possessed of THE HUMAN NATURE, he could not be *our* surety ; and, were he not possessed of THE DIVINE NATURE, he could not be a Saviour at all. Thus the importance of clear and spiritual views of this subject can scarcely be overrated.

Many christians *practically* lose sight and hold of the Saviour's true humanity, although they *doctrinally* acknowledge it. They run into this error either from the contemplation of his perfect holiness, as separating him, in nature, from us who are so sinful ; or from an exclusive attention to his divinity, in which they conceive his power to save must altogether lie. But it is most desirable that this practical error should be prevented or removed, as its existence cannot fail to interfere with the stability of a christian's faith, and with his enjoyment of the privileges and consolations of the Gospel.

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